

January 27, 2021

Jerry Kickenson
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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB317

Office of the Attorney General - Right to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings Coordinator

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Jerry Kickenson

My name is Jerry Kickenson, and I live in Silver Spring, District 18. I am writing in support of SB317, Right to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings Coordinator.

Our sacred texts in Jewish tradition teach us to welcome the stranger, for we were strangers in the land of Egypt. Leviticus 19:34 explicitly instructs us to treat the immigrant in our land the same as native citizens.

SB317 would provide legal representation for Maryland residents facing detention or deportation in immigration court. Having legal counsel has been shown to be the critical difference in whether an immigrant gets to be free pending adjudication of his or her asylum request, and whether an immigrant is deported or is allowed to live freely and safely with his or her family in the U.S. Keeping families whole is a fundamental tenet of many faith traditions.

I respectfully urge you to reach a favorable report for SB317. It will provide true due process to all residents of Maryland facing loss of their liberty and home. It is the right and moral thing to do.