

## Support for HB 304 Trust Act

To House Judiciary Chair Luke Clippinger, Assistant Chair Vanessa Atterbeary, and Judiciary Committee Members

I am Mary Ann Ford, a longtime resident of Buckeystown in Frederick, Maryland. I ask for the Committee to vote for HB 304 the Trust Act.

We have just experienced a year where thousands of Marylanders marched for police reform for its black and brown citizens. These protests bear out the inequities, biases and injustices in law enforcement. A reform that is long overdue is stopping state and local law enforcement agencies from becoming immigration enforcers--from partnering with ICE through 287 (g) agreements. These partnerships undermine effective community policing and promote racial profiling and discrimination against immigrants and their families. It is time then --way past time for the state Maryland to pass the Trust Act. The State Office of the Attorney General should be the office under which relations with federal immigration customs and enforcement are conducted.

As a longtime resident of Frederick County, I am a witness to the harm to the County and its residents—newcomers and longtime residents alike from the Frederick County Sheriff's Department 287 (g) ICE partnership. Its 287 (g) agreement first signed in 2008 and continuing since has provided Sheriff Charles Jenkins with a public platform to aggressively promote unfounded claims about threats to public safety from new arrivals from Central America. His fervent anti-immigrant stance creates hostility and fear amongst Latino and Hispano communities. FOX NEWS has compared him to Arizona's infamous Sheriff Joe Arpio.

The Frederick County Sheriff's Departments 287 (g) ICE partnership is controversial and opposition to it has been growing in recent years. Clergy and citizens have called for its end. The County Council in response to public protest called for an audit to the program. In October 2019 two large rallies were held at the same time in Frederick City. One was called by the Sheriff and his supporters to uphold his 287 (g) agreement and the other was organized by activists to show support for immigrants targeted by 287 (g). Evidence of the County's effort to demonstrate its support of f new immigrants can be found in a planning document the Council passed in 2019. Called Livable Frederick 2040, the vision statement Frederick "is a place where different people from all backgrounds live, work and play together" signals its welcome to its immigrant residents. Still under the provisions of 287 (g), it's the Sheriff who has the authority to make an ICE agreement and the County Council has no power to end it.

In Frederick County as elsewhere 287 (g) partnerships have undermined law enforcement and created mistrust of police and political division. Most state and local law enforcement agencies have chosen not to take on these duties.

Let's restore trust in Maryland law enforcement and pass HB 304 without amendments.

