



## POSITION STATEMENT

**Bill:** HB 304 / SB 88 – State and Local Government – Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

**Position:** SUPPORT

**Date:** March 1, 2021

**Contact:** Darryl McSwain, Montgomery County Division Chief, M-NC Park Police  
Stanley Johnson, Prince George’s County Division Chief, M-NC Park Police

**What The Bill Does:** This bill would support state and local law enforcement personnel by protecting victims and people who witness crime but fear interacting with police for reasons relating to federal immigration enforcement.

**Why We Support:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“Commission” or “M-NCPPC”) supports this bill because it comports with our DNA and history of community policing as follows:

It is the goal of the M-NCPPC Park Police to treat all persons with respect, compassion, courtesy, equality, and professionalism regardless of citizenship or immigration status. In consideration of the delicate balance between crime prevention, immigration concerns, and unwillingness of eyewitnesses to come forward, unless mandated by Federal or State law, we will endeavor to not inquire about the immigration status of a person in the normal course of fulfilling our duties. This includes interviewing witnesses and victims of crime.

With over 200 sworn law enforcement officers under command, the Commission and leaders of its Park Police divisions want to minimize the chance that community members may suffer in silence or a dire need of social services – as victims or witnesses of crime. Too many of the people we serve are not communicating with our team due to a fear that contacting the Park Police will automatically result in a report to federal authorities. Particularly after a number of publicized raids by federal authorities, our leaders have observed people in the community withdrawing from civic engagement, schools, restaurants and other social congregations.

The bill strikes a prudent balance between complying with federal judicial warrants and, at the same time, mitigating the potential to disrupt community confidence without legal necessity.

The Commission accordingly urges your favorable report.

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