

Ismenia Bolivar, Resident of Baltimore City, District 46

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB304

State and Local Government - Participation in Immigration Enforcement
Judiciary Committee

March 3, 2021

Dear Honorable Chairman Clippinger and the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Ismenia Bolivar and ask for your support in passing the Trust Act, HB304, this year. I am Venezuelan and I came to the City of Baltimore two years ago. I consider Baltimore City my home. In Venezuela, I practiced civil law for 20 years with a focus on the protection of women and adolescent children. I came to this county fleeing the political, economic, and humanitarian situation that Venezuela is going through. Currently, I work as a health promoter to help fight COVID-19 and I am a member of a multiracial group in the Lakeland Community in South Baltimore. I am also a member of a Brooklyn Beautification Volunteer Group.

Because I can't practice law in this country yet, I've joined CASA in the fight for social justice and community rights. I've been working a lot on the police reform campaign. During my experience working with CASA, I got to know so many immigrants in the city. There is one story that I will always remember that happened to my neighbors right here in South Baltimore.

The story is of a woman who was deported after reporting the theft of her vehicle to 911. The local police, instead of helping her, called ICE. She managed to escape until another day, her car caught on fire on the highway. She needed help, but instead, police officers arrived and she was arrested, detained and then eventually deported. She left two citizen children behind in the care of close relatives. It is stories like this that fuel immigrants mistrust of the state and local authorities.

The Trust Act has been introduced so many times. How much longer must we fight to make Maryland a safe place for immigrants? Members of the Committee, please vote in favor of the Trust Act, HB304. We are depending on you.