



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)

DATE: March 3, 2021

RE: HB304 State and Local Government – Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

The MLLC supports HB304 State and Local Government – Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement.

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB304.

While states can choose to assist in immigration regulation and enforcement, the federal government has the legal power to enforce U.S. immigration laws. This process can result in a lack of clarity and consistency in the ways in which immigration cases are processed across Maryland. It is important that the state protects its residents and that collaborations between local law enforcement and ICE do not target individuals who have no criminal history.

Maryland is home to thousands of immigrants, documented and undocumented alike. [One in seven](#) Maryland residents is an immigrant, while one in eight residents is a native-born U.S citizen with at least one immigrant parent. Over 126,000 U.S citizens in Maryland live with at least one family member who is undocumented. These are our family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. We must establish a sense of support to our immigrant communities.

Undocumented immigrants are afraid of reporting crimes because they fear the repercussion of interacting with law enforcement. If public safety is a priority, it is time to rebuild the trust between our vulnerable immigrant communities and all enforcement state agencies. Something as simple as prohibiting inquiries on an individual's citizenship, immigration status, or place of birth during a stop or an arrest could positively impact our residents and make them feel safe and protected.

HB304 clarifies the parameters of State and local participation in federal immigration enforcement efforts. Without a judicial warrant, officers may not detain an individual beyond the period prescribed by the law or solely for a civil immigration enforcement purpose. Additionally, the Attorney General will create guidance on ICE enforcement on the premises of schools, hospitals, and courthouses. We stay committed to keeping our hard-working undocumented families together.

The MLLC supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB304.