

March 3, 2021

Zach Mancher  
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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB304/SB88**

**State and Local Government- Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement**

**TO:** Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, and members of the Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** Zach Mancher, on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ)

My name is Zach Mancher. I live in Silver Spring in District 18. This testimony is in support of HB304/SB88, State and Local Government-Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement, and on behalf of Jews United for Justice. JUFJ organizes more than 5,500 Jewish Marylanders and allies in support of local and state campaigns for social, racial, and economic justice.

I am a lawyer, a public servant, and the grandson of immigrants. This bill is in line with my Jewish value of Tikkun Olam, "Repairing the World." I believe that this tenet applies not just to individuals, but to the government, as the voice of collective action under our social contract. The government should be in the business of helping, not hurting, people's lives, and that is what passing HB304 will do.

By preventing law enforcement from working with ICE and other federal agencies, HB304 protects immigrants from coercion so that community members can call on police without being harassed. It gives these people, my neighbors and community members, the protection of the laws, giving them safety in their homes, jobs, and lives. Further, it allows individuals to fully participate in society, using schools, hospitals, and courthouses without fear.

My great-grandmother emigrated to the United States in 1939 with my four-year-old grandfather in tow. Once here, she worked six days a week at a sweatshop, plus nights at a pizza place in order to provide for her family. When they needed it, they could and did rely on public benefits without fear of coercion. When my grandfather finished high school, he was able to apply for, and receive full scholarships to college and graduate school. It is because they were able to live, go to school, and participate in society, that my grandfather was able to prosper

and give his family a better life than what he had growing up, and set up future generations for success.

While HB304 will not solve all the problems in our immigration system, it does take a step towards “Repairing the World.” It gives immigrants a chance to live without fear of every interaction with government services or law enforcement. This protects immigrants in their homes, where they know they can report domestic violence. This eases the minds of immigrants on the road, where a simple moving violation won’t lead to entirely disproportionate consequences. This can help immigrants at work, where they can’t be coerced into working in unsafe conditions or for fear of being reported.

It is because of the freedoms like these that immigrants like my grandparents and great-grandparents were able to be successful, build lives for their families, and embody the American Dream. **JUFJ respectfully urges a favorable report for HB304/SB88.**