



Montgomery County Young Democrats Testimony to House Judiciary Committee in Support of HB 304-Trust Act 3/03/2021

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary,

Thank you for receiving our testimony. We are an organization of young Democrats ages 14-34 who are working to make Montgomery County and Maryland better places to live, with freedom, opportunity, and justice for all. We are testifying in support of HB 304 - State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement - sponsored by Delegate Wanika Fisher. This bill will help protect undocumented immigrants from being deported without good cause, promote trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities, and keep families together.

HB 304, commonly known as the Trust Act, has several important provisions. It ends police cooperation with Immigration, Customs, and Enforcement (ICE) and other federal immigration agencies. Specifically the bill prevents law enforcement from asking about someone's immigration status, detaining someone on behalf of ICE, or notifying/transferring someone to ICE. Additionally, HB 304 protects undocumented immigrants from ICE in certain locations like schools, courthouses, and hospitals by requiring the Maryland Attorney General's office to create guidance on ICE enforcement in those areas. The bill protects undocumented immigrants against coercion to ensure that people can interact with police and report crimes without fear of harassment or deportation.

Legally Maryland has no requirement to assist ICE with immigration enforcement. ICE has brutally enforced the former Trump administration's terrorizing of immigrants, including the separation of families. Many undocumented immigrants have family members or children who are documented, and when they are arrested and threatened with deportation, families are ripped apart! This is appalling and Maryland should not spend its resources and money on these unjust and inhumane policies.

The Trust Act will also encourage immigrants, both documented and undocumented, to report serious crimes to the police and work with law enforcement to try to solve them. Currently

many immigrants are wary of the police because they fear being harassed or reported to ICE, or that their friends and family members will experience that treatment. The Trust Act will ease that fear.

A number of cities and counties have passed similar policies to stop police cooperation with ICE. We are proud that Montgomery County is one of them. As a nation of immigrants, America should welcome immigrants and help them in pursuing the American Dream.

By passing the Trust Act and ending police cooperation with ICE, Maryland can protect undocumented families, make our communities safer, and send a clear message that our state welcomes immigrants.

Please contact us at mocoyoungdems@gmail.com if you have any questions.