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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE MARYLAND TRUST ACT

My name is Emily Blank and I am a Maryland resident in District 47a. This testimony is in support of the Trust Act, SB88/HB304. I am writing as a Core Leader of the Prince George's County Bend the Arc Minyan and as a member of Jews United for Justice.

One of the core beliefs of my faith is that "You shall not mistreat the stranger among you. Remember that you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 15:15).

My parents were born in the United States, but their parents both arrived from Russia in the early 20th century. Had they not, they would have been caught up in the Holocaust, and I might never have been born.

However, the opportunity my grandparents had to move to the relative safety of the United States is not extended to many people facing dire circumstances, people who are in immediate peril of their lives, escaping possible torture and death from gangs, from their governments, from poverty, from war. They deserve the same opportunities to live in peace and freedom as my grandparents had.

The reasons to protect immigrants from targeting by ICE are not only moral, but practical. If undocumented families are confident that interactions with police will NOT result in a visit from ICE, they will be much more likely to report any crimes they witness to the police. This will improve public safety for all residents. Further, assisting ICE costs money that could be better used for the state and local governments. Laws similar to the Trust Act have been already enacted in many localities and states.

Thank you for your attention. I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB88/HB304.