



OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Worcester County

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DIANA PURNELL

February 2, 2021

Senate Delegation for the Eastern Shore
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

House Delegation for the Eastern Shore
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Senator Mary Beth Carozza
314 James Senate Office Building

Honorable Senator Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
420 James Senate Office Building

Honorable Senator Adelaide C. Eckardt
322 James Senate Office Building

Honorable Delegate Charles J. Otto
321 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Wayne A. Hartman
308 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Christopher T. Adams
426 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes
427 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Johnny Mautz
424 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Carl Anderton, Jr.
310 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Steven J. Arentz
308 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Jefferson L. Ghrist
430 House Office Building

Honorable Delegate Jay A. Jacobs
321 House Office Building

RE: Opposition to HB 16 and SB 478 (Correctional Services - Immigration Detention - Prohibition - (Dignity Not Detention Act))

Dear Distinguished Senators and Delegates representing the Eastern Shore:

The Worcester County Commissioners reviewed a copy of House Bill 16 and Senate Bill 478 (Correctional Services - Immigration Detention - Prohibition - Dignity Not Detention Act). We understand that these bills would prohibit governmental entities in Maryland, including Worcester County, from housing immigration-related detainees as of October 1, 2022. The Worcester County Commissioners unanimously oppose this legislation and ask that you vigorously oppose these bills on our behalf.

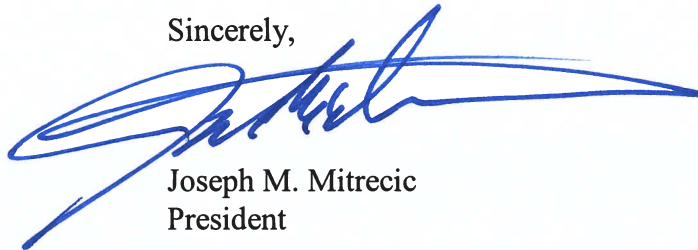
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Worcester County has been housing up to 200 immigration-related detainees under contract with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) since 1999. We provide a safe and secure environment for these detainees who are pending processing under federal regulations. The Worcester County Jail, and others in Maryland, play a critical role in providing sufficient facilities to house these immigration-related detainees.

The Worcester County Jail was expanded in 2011 to increase our capacity from 319 beds to 502 beds to house our seasonal influx of detainees during the summer season, but also to provide additional space for immigration-related detainees during the rest of the year. Furthermore, our annual budget for the Worcester County Jail relies heavily on revenues from ICE to support our operations. Specifically, ICE revenues in FY19 contributed \$5.1 Million towards our total Jail budget of \$9.2 Million. Prohibition of these services and the resulting loss of revenues would be devastating to the operations of the Worcester County Jail.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We would sincerely appreciate your support in opposing House Bill 16 and Senate Bill 478. If you should have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact either me or Harold L. Higgins, Chief Administrative Officer, at this office.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. Mitrecic
President

KM
CC: Donna Bounds, Warden