



Virginia Rodino, Chair
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, MD chapter
202-465-0918
virginia.rodino@gmail.com

SB 478/HB 016 — SUPPORT

Correctional Services – Immigration Detention – Prohibition (Dignity Not Detention Act)

February 29, 2021

Dear Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland Chapter of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO, strongly supports HB 016, the Dignity not Detention Act. We are part of the national Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) which is the first and only national organization of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers and our allies advancing worker, immigrant and civil rights. Among other broad efforts, APALA works to defend and advocate for the civil and human rights of AAPIs, immigrants and all people of color.

Viewed as perpetual foreigners, the AAPI community is no stranger to racism and xenophobia in this country. We have seen firsthand the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. We have felt the pain of families torn apart with the increased deportations and criminalization of Southeast Asian community members. And we have witnessed hate violence against Muslim or perceived-to-be Muslim friends and family.

Painted as the “model minority,” we are also pitted against other immigrants and communities of color. Marching for justice after the beating of Rodney King at our founding convention, APALA is proud of our deep roots of solidarity and resistance. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, APALA will keep fighting for all communities under oppression.

Our racial and immigrant justice work currently focuses on opposing policies designed targeting, silencing, and oppressing our community members. We fight to protect family unity by defending family immigration and supporting comprehensive immigration reform.

We urge the passage of Dignity not Detention so that families can stay together and be healthy together. APALA MD urges you to support SB 478/HB 16.

Thank you,
Virginia Rodino
Chair, APALA MD