

Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee
March 3, 2021

HB 304 - State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement
FAVORABLE

3/3/2021

Dear Chairs of the Judiciary Committee Luke Clippinger and Vanessa Atterbeary,

Good afternoon,

My name is Flor Garay, and I write to urge your support of Bill SB 88, on behalf of the RISE immigrant justice coalition in Frederick Maryland.

To get a sense of the damage caused by 287g on our community, please see below for my recent press statement in response to the successful settlement of the racial profiling lawsuit against our Sheriff Jenkins, on behalf of plaintiffs Sara Medrano and RISE. We won this case, but still we know this behavior represents a pattern that has impacted hundreds and even thousands of county residents who don't feel safe or welcome here.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Attentively,

RISE Coalition MD

January 21, 2021

My name is Flor Garay. thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf the members of the RISE Coalition of Western Maryland known as "La Coalicion"

I am here today to denounce the numerous civil violations that members of the immigrant community in Frederick County have been subjected while under Sheriff Jenkins control and administration of the 287g program. We have seen a pattern and practice by the Frederick County Sheriff's Office that deliberately discriminates against immigrants of color.

What happened to Roxanna Orellana Santos in 2008 was unwarranted! Roxanna was simply eating her lunch during her work break when a Frederick County sheriff illegally detained and placed her in handcuffs while they investigated her immigration status.

What regularly happens to Mr. A. G, another member of the immigrant community, is simply an act of racism by the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. Over the last two years, Mr. A. G has been stopped at least 7 times and questioned about his immigration status because of the color of his skin. This is unfair and must stop. The racial profiling of immigrants of color is illegal.

I really wished that we did not have to be here today. I wish that Ms. Medrano had never been subjected to an illegal seizure by Frederick County Sheriff's Office deputies. Ms. Medrano did nothing wrong on afternoon of July 7, 2018. Ms. Medrano was simply driving to a friend's house when she was detained with her children in the car for more than 1 hour while deputies unsuccessfully contacted ICE.

There are no words to comfort and repair the fear, humiliation, and emotional distress suffered by Ms. Medrano and her children. Because of the illegal administration of the 287g program in Frederick County, many undocumented immigrants live in constant fear of deportation and the ultimate separation from their families. The trauma suffered as consequence of the illegal acts committed by Frederick County Sheriff's Office deputies, are scarring our children mental and emotional wellbeing. No children in Frederick County should have to live under fear of their parent's deportation---not by the institution that promises to protect and serve all residents in Frederick County.

It is disturbing to know that Sheriff Jenkins anti-immigrant rhetoric has translated into the practice anti-immigrant policing in Frederick. No resident of Frederick county should have to fear reporting crimes because they fear police retaliation. The immigrant communities like all other communities deserve the equal protection of the law.

I commend nuestra compañera Ms. Medrano for standing up for her rights and for the rights of other community members who have been profiled and discriminated against by the Frederick County Sheriff's Office.

Ms. Medrano--today is a significant day for the entire immigrant community because you are setting the record clear that racial profiling and discrimination by Frederick County Sheriff's Office will NOT be tolerated.

Thank you, Ms. Medrano, for your "**ganas**" to keep going despite all adversity. Thank you for all of your tears and your courage to stand up for yourself and your family.

Thank you to ACLU attorneys, Nicholas T. Steiner and Brian Whittaker, for your legal advocacy and hard work defending the individual rights and liberties of the people.

We are the RISE Coalition of Western Maryland and will continue to fight for the equal and fair treatment of our community members.

Thank you.