



BILL NO: House Bill 304
TITLE: State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: March 3, 2021
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 304.**

Domestic violence against immigrant women is believed to be almost three times the national average.¹ In a 2015 survey, survivors of domestic violence state that they were afraid to call police because the police would contact immigrations authorities, that criminal charges related to the domestic violence could lead to deportation of themselves or the abuser and that they could lose custody of their children.² Abusers use the immigration status of their victim as another way to exert power and control.³

This legislation clarifies and limits the authority of state and local law enforcement and correctional agencies and employees to assist federal immigration authorities with civil immigration enforcement. It does not address criminal immigration enforcement. In so doing, this bill would help ensure that all Marylanders, regardless of immigration status, have the Constitutional rights to which they are entitled, and provide important protections that build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. HB 304 does not alter the criminal legal system, but rather works to restore community trust in our law enforcement officials, improve public safety, and stop the expenditure of precious local dollars on federal enforcement efforts. Survivors of domestic violence must be able to safely report their abuse, and seek services, without fear of deportation.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on HB 304.**

¹ Dutton, M., Molina, R. and Young, L. (2015). Evidence of Coercive Control: Proof of Extreme Cruelty in Immigration Cases and Power and Control Dynamics in Family Law Cases. [online] National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project. Available at: <http://library.niwap.org/wp-content/uploads/Powerpoint-Evidence-ofCoercive-Control-Proof-of-Extreme-Cruelty-in-Immigration-Cases-and-Power-and-Control-Dynamics-in-FamilyLaw-Cases.pdf>

² Coker, Donna K. and Park, Sandra S. and Goldscheid, Julie and Neal, Tara and Halstead, Valerie, Responses from the Field: Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Policing (October 1, 2015). University of Miami Legal Studies Research Paper No. 16-2, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2709499> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2709499>

³ Dutton, Mary; Leslye Orloff, and Giselle Aguilar Hass. 2000. "Characteristics of Help-Seeking Behaviors, Resources, and Services Needs of Battered Immigrant Latinas: Legal and Policy Implications." Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy. 7(2).
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