

Claudia Ramos Ardon, Resident of Prince George's County
Testimony in SUPPORT of HB304

State and Local Government - Participation in Immigration Enforcement (Trust Act)
Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2021

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Claudia Ramos Ardon. I am writing to you to ask your support for HB304 to support families like mine.

Almost two years ago, in February of 2019, I was driving my young child to daycare in Hyattsville. I had two of my other children in the car with me as well. As I was driving to the daycare, I got in a small car accident that wasn't my fault. I was rear-ended from a car that was rear ended by another car. My car was barely damaged so I was disappointed that I had to stay until the police arrived before leaving. When the police arrived, they took all of our information. I was surprised when the police allowed the other cars that were there to leave, but not mine, even though the other cars were in worse condition.

The police held me there for an hour, and ICE showed up. After being a victim of a car accident, the police, instead of helping me, called ICE. ICE handcuffed me and drove me to Baltimore where I was detained for a day. All I could think about was my kids.

I have been living here with my family since 2005 and my family has no future in El Salvador. Here is our home. Although I was released from ICE custody, I am still fighting my deportation case to this day. I work as a housekeeper and I've spent every bit of my savings paying for my lawyer to help me stop my deportation. I have a court date scheduled in a few months and I am very nervous about what will happen.

This experience with the police has not only traumatized me, but has traumatized my children as well. I was so happy that last year, the Prince George's County Council unanimously passed their version of the Trust Act - so that stories like mine won't happen again. But, in order for us to truly be able to trust the police, we need to pass this bill in all of Maryland.

I continue to share my story, so that what happened to me will not happen to others. Legislators, you have the power to put an end to this family separation. I hope, with all of my heart, that you consider my story by supporting families like mine. Please support HB304.