

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

FAVORABLE

To Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, and Committee members,

My name is Carol Antoniewicz and I live in Frederick, Maryland, in District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 304, the Trust Act. I am fully in favor of preventing local law enforcement agencies partnering with ICE. I believe such agreements have caused much harm in Frederick County, in regard to the relationships between law enforcement and the immigrant community as well as by promoting the falsehood that immigrants are a danger to other residents.

In my community immigrants have been targeted by unjust federal immigration enforcement, (Santos, Jenkins, Medrano) by the Sheriff's Department which participates in the 287(g) program. From the beginning, 287(g) has led to numerous stories of racial profiling and discrimination, harassment, and illegal stops, arrests, and detainment. The impact of these unjust policies is not just felt by individuals but threatens entire communities. I know of immigrant families that have been torn apart when one parent was deported – not as a criminal, just here after their visa had expired. When Maryland families and residents live in fear of interacting with police, it makes everyone unsafe.

We have seen the inhumanity of ICE actions across the U.S. Maryland can be safe without having ICE agreements. We need to send a clear message that immigrants are safe and welcome here, and that their Constitutional rights and dignity are protected.

Many local jurisdictions have already passed Trust policies, and now is the time for Maryland to protect immigrants everywhere across our state. With the General Assembly focused on reforming police practices this session, we need to ensure that immigrants are not excluded from these historic reforms.

Now is the time to pass the Trust Act, so that Maryland fully acknowledges the humanity of my immigrant neighbors, and keeps all our communities safe.

I urge a favorable vote on HB 304.

Sincerely,

Carol Antoniewicz
ecacres@comcast.net
8207 Gambrill Park Road
Frederick, MD 21702