

HB 304 - SUPPORT

State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

House Judiciary Committee

March 3, 2021

Dear Chair and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to you as a lifelong Maryland resident in support of HB 304, the State and Local Government – Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement Act, also known as the Maryland Trust Act, and urge this committee to support this legislation. Born and raised in Silver Spring, Maryland, I am proud to say I have been by the values instilled in me by our vibrant and diverse community. These values include the recognition that everyone in our state should live with fundamental dignity and safety, regardless of their immigration status or country of origin.

The Maryland Trust Act is an important law that upholds Maryland values by limiting cooperation between Maryland police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Over the past several years, we have seen how federal immigration enforcement has led to the cruel separation of families, erosion of public trust, and targeting of immigrant communities.

Importantly, the Maryland Trust Act would end the participation of local jurisdictions in 287(g) programs that operate through racial profiling and targeting of immigrant communities. Police-ICE collaboration can often lead to extended detention without proper due process, as police facilitate the transfer of residents into ICE custody. During a pandemic, we know the heightened risks of detention, where detainees receive subpar medical care and are unable to safely distance. Across the country, there are many reports of medical neglect and dangerous conditions where detainees are at greater risk of COVID-19. Interactions with Maryland police should not lead to federal detention centers, deportations, or worse, death.

The Maryland Trust Act would also provide clear guidance for police preventing Maryland police from inquiring about immigration status or place of birth, transferring people to ICE without a judicial warrant, notifying ICE about immigrants' location, and using local law enforcement resources for immigration enforcement.

As a Maryland resident and environmental and human rights campaigner, I can firmly say we do not want our police complicit in human rights violations that we have seen ICE perpetuate. Maryland values means protecting our neighbors from an inhumane and arbitrary immigration system that endangers the wellbeing of communities and our great state.

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Gaurav Madan

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Every Maryland resident deserves due process, dignity, and to life safely in our community. I hope the House Judiciary Committee upholds Maryland values and returns a favorable report on HB 304.

Sincerely,



Gaurav Madan