

Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee  
March 3, 2021

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

**FAVORABLE**

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

My name is David Wolinsky, grandson of immigrants and husband of an immigrant. My wife and I have lived in Frederick for “only” 25 years, 20 of them in District 8. So I guess I, too, am an immigrant.

Others will have testified to the harm and fear spread by ICE, and local advocates of “self-deportation”. Others can explain better than I why that is bad for law enforcement. My daughter might tell you of the fear she and her husband have for their brown-skinned children, all three of whom -- kindergarten to high school -- attend Frederick County public schools.

Grandpa, though far from colorblind, just wants to speak as what “citizen” was supposed to mean when he was a kid. And now.

We need each other. All of us, however we or our ancestors got here. I need the Post Office, EMS and the police, and I need my neighbors and nearby farmers. I need the helpful person at Home Depot and the plumber when that’s not enough. Etc. I’m not trying to bore you. You know what life has been like in a nation where, it almost seems, half the country suspects the other half of ugly intentions. And how Covid-19 has made everything more difficult.

This did not start a plague or with ICE; it did not start in 2017. But everything from separating and “losing” or caging undocumented children, **to 287(g)**, has made it worse. Sadly, our Sherriff’s Dept. has taken leadership in promoting that nightmare: Despise Thy Neighbor. Fear Thy Neighbor. Stop them on the road and in the streets; deport them when you can. There are thousands of honorable officials and law-enforcement leaders who have not chosen that road.

You can join them. Pass the Trust Act. It is not an ironic name for HB 304, but a small step in helping our neighbors trust each other (and the cops) more. It is a big step for neighbors who shop in the same stores as I do – and drive or walk along The Road Formerly Known as the Golden Mile, Rt. 40 hereabouts – to become more of a community. More integrated into our larger county and state communities.

I am testifying to support and love my neighbors – and the many others across Maryland who are not only my jurisdictional neighbors, but my neighbors in spirit.

Animo y amor,  
David Almaleck Wolinsky