

7 February 2023

Judiciary Committee

House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Vote YES on House Bill 193

Delegates of the Judiciary Committee,

I support Bill 193 because it will enable Judges to give Probation Before Judgements (PBJs) without the fear of inadvertently deporting non-citizens. I am a law clerk in the Baltimore City Circuit Court, and I have routinely seen Judges give PBJs as a means to facilitate second chances for defendants who made a mistake and need an opportunity to get their life back on track. However, as interpreted by the federal government, a PBJ for a non-citizen does not mean a second chance—it could mean deportation, which, in the worst cases, can mean death.

This bill is a common-sense remedy to put more power in the hands of Maryland's Judges to do what they think is right to carry out justice. This bill reduces unnecessary federal interference within our state. By ensuring that non-citizens do not face the threat of deportation through a PBJ, it protects the fabric of our communities by ensuring that family members, neighbors, and taxpayers are not cruelly removed despite a local Judge's assessment that they pose no ongoing threat to our safety. Please support Bill 193 and end the threat of deportation over a PBJ for non-citizens.

Sincerely,

Alexander Payne

Resident of House District 46

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