

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 828

SB 828 - Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)

Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee

March 4, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dominique Ashen PhD, CRNP and I am a nurse practitioner providing direct preventive cardiovascular care services to undocumented immigrants in Baltimore. I am pleased to offer **a favorable testimony in strong support of SB 828- Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act).**

I am inspired to support the mission of providing safety and service to my patients in the health care center where I work which has been and should remain a sensitive location. I strongly support HB 1006 and want to prevent a rescission that would open the private area of health care centers like mine to immigration enforcement action which would create fear in patients and disrupt life saving health services. If they are afraid they will not come for the care they need.

In fact, all locations deemed sensitive, including schools, social services establishments, and places of worship, to name a few, are private and should be protected as such. They should not be accessible to ICE agents.

For over a decade, federal policy limited Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activities in sensitive locations—such as hospitals, schools, courthouses, and places of worship—to prevent intimidation and ensure access to essential services. However, as of January 20, 2025, the revocation of these protections has left immigrant communities vulnerable to enforcement actions in spaces where they should feel safe.

This shift has already created an environment of fear and uncertainty, discouraging individuals from seeking medical care, pursuing education, accessing legal resources, or engaging with law enforcement. As a result, our communities, public health, and overall safety are at risk. Everyone should access essential services without fear of detention or separation. Public safety improves when immigrants feel safe reporting crimes and seeking help. Clear enforcement boundaries build trust, strengthening communities and institutions. For these reasons, **I, Dominique Ashen, urge the committee to provide a favorable report on SB 828.**