

## **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,

I am submitting **favorable testimony in strong support of SB 828- Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)**.

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.

President Trump said he was only arresting undocumented criminals. And yet I read in the local newspaper about Baltimore ICE arresting “collaterals”, undocumented immigrants with no criminal record who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, some of them longtime Maryland residents and community members, who pay taxes and have mixed-status families who rely on them.

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.

I am a nurse who has worked in a local hospital for over 12 years. We do not ask a patient or visitor for their citizenship status, because everyone deserves access to healthcare, to be treated with dignity, and should not be afraid to seek emergency health services. Allowing ICE into my place of work would interfere with providing safe patient care.

During the first Trump administration, I volunteered for an organization where I interviewed potential sponsors of asylum seekers. Sponsors would provide asylees a place to live, enroll their kids in school, and help them navigate their new country while awaiting their immigration hearing. Unlike refugees, I was surprised to learn that asylum seekers were not allowed to work and were not eligible for federal resources, often relying instead on the kindness of faith groups

and state initiatives.

My place of worship participates in a local food pantry and offers emergency utility and eviction assistance. We do not ask for citizen status either because everyone deserves to be fed and have a safe place to live, which aligns with Jesus's teachings and my Christian values. The threat of ICE showing up at my church will discourage immigrants from seeking these resources.

Matthew 25:34-40 says,

“you who are blessed by my Father,...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.”

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 **urge the committee to provide a favorable report on SB 828.**

Sincerely,

Jen Roman

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