

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 828

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

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

March 4, 2025

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

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 a 74-year-old resident of District 20 and have lived most of my life in Maryland. I am also the grandchild of immigrants, and an active member of a faith community that teaches us the importance of “welcoming the stranger” in our midst. Finally, I am an active volunteer with organizations that work with those who have fled torture and persecution in their home countries to seek asylum in the US.

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 sudden 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.

Because everyone should be able too access essential services without fear of detention or separation, and because public safety requires that immigrants feel safe reporting crimes and seeking help, there must be clear boundaries to immigration enforcement. Immigrants must be protected in the hospitals where they go to receive health care, in the courthouses where they go to seek justice, in the schools where they take their children to be educated, and in the churches and mosques where they go to worship in fellowship. In order to build trust, strengthen our communities and “welcome the stranger”, I urge the committee **to provide a favorable report on SB 828**.

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