

February 19, 2025

Rabbi Ariana Katz
Baltimore, Maryland 21218



TESTIMONY ON SB 828 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies
(Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Rabbi Ariana Katz, on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ)

My name is Rabbi Ariana Katz. I am a resident of District 43 in Baltimore City. I am a parent, neighbor, and congregational rabbi of a 250 family synagogue. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Jews United for Justice in support of SB 828, the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act. JUFJ organizes 6,000 Jews and allies from across Maryland in support of state and local social, racial, and economic justice campaigns.

“V’asu li mikdash v’shachanti btocham,” says God in Exodus 25:8. Make for me a sanctuary, that I may dwell amongst them. Our houses of worship, our schools, our hospitals, and our public gatherings are all sanctuaries that make it possible for the Divine to rest among us. It is our community's trust that when they are with us, they can pray, learn, heal, and gather in safety. The increased ferocity of ICE officials raiding any location in our community is a *shande*, an outrageous shame. All the more so in these previously protected sacred places. *Vasu li mikdash v’shachanti btocham*. To all our undocumented family, we will keep working to make sanctuary with you, because the divine dwells where you dwell.

As we witness and experience immigrant members of our communities coming under attack by the new federal administration, we are counting on the General Assembly to act swiftly in response to these federal attacks. The state must act as well. This includes passing this emergency legislation to limit ICE access to essential spaces, including schools, courthouses, healthcare facilities, and places of worship.

On behalf of JUFJ, I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 828.