

February 28, 2025

TESTIMONY ON SB 828/HB 1006 - 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: Catherine Bergmann, PhD, MPH

My name is Catherine Bergmann. I am a resident of District 22. I am submitting this testimony in support of (SB 828/HB 1006), Immigration Enforcement — Sensitive Locations — Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act).

I support immigrant rights, in part because I'm the daughter of immigrants. My Jewish parents were born in Germany in 1925. They grew up in the hostile Nazi environment and experienced dangerous anti-semitism daily. As Jews, they were removed from the public schools. Their places of worship were attacked. They could only see Jewish medical providers. Many of their relatives were killed in extermination camps. They each escaped as teenagers in 1937. My mother spent time in the Netherlands before moving to the US. My maternal grandfather was permitted to take only \$10 cash from Germany, so they had little money in those early years. My dad escaped to Switzerland and came to the US in 1946 at the age of 21. Although he had no English, he quickly found work to support his mother and grandmother. My parents married in 1950 and became naturalized citizens. I was the first in the family to be born in the US.

While growing up I was told that Nazi atrocities happened because ordinary Germans along with the rest of the world let them happen. It is necessary to speak up and fight against authoritarian power. I also learned that the Nazis started with immigrants.

I've lived in Riverdale Park, Maryland for 32 years. My husband and I raised our children here. Now, in 2025, I see parallels between our current federal government and the fascist Germany in which my parents grew up. The Trump administration has allowed ICE enforcers to enter sensitive locations: schools, churches, and hospitals. Children are avoiding school to avoid family separation by ICE. Churches are no longer safe havens. Immigrants are avoiding necessary medical care. Just like what my parents experienced in Nazi Germany.

We need to protect sensitive sites from over-reaching and cruel immigration enforcement. Maryland is better than that.

I respectfully urge the committee to provide a favorable report on SB 828/HB 1006.

Thank you.