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**Testimony on SB0828 - Position FAVORABLE
Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies
(Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)**

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

I am Claire Landers, a Maryland resident of Baltimore County, offering **favorable testimony in strong support of SB0828 the “Protecting Sensitive Locations Act”**.

Just weeks ago, in a Baltimore County Public School, a school teacher obsessively contacted ICE to report immigrant students and assist in their removal by ICE agents: As a Jew and a parent, I just could not help but feel that this teacher would have been "employee of the month" in Nazi Germany's purge of Jewish students in the 1930's; it just takes my breath away to know that an adult with such venomous character toward immigrant kids was reaching out to ICE to assure they would be deported.

I am a member of the Jewish community in Pikesville, where I would wager every local Jewish family here established themselves via at least one ancestor who fled persecution and/or extreme economic hardship from Russian cossacks at in the late 19th-early 20th century, Nazi persecution in the 1930's, Holocaust concentration camps post-WWII, Soviet persecution in the 1970's-80's and Khomeini's Iran in the 1980's-90's. They most certainly were *not* always welcomed here due to antisemitism and rank xenophobia from many, many Americans.

As immigrants, their goal was to obtain safety and achieve economic stability for their families. I venture to assert that Baltimore and Maryland have benefited from these waves of Jewish – and other immigrants in past decades – who became citizens and have made their own significant contributions to our great state, our nation and the collective American Dream.

Today's immigrants in Maryland are similarly fleeing dangerous, criminal regimes and extreme poverty in Central America, Mexico, Haiti and elsewhere. And these immigrants have become the backbone of the low-wage, hard labor service economy that Maryland businesses and individuals deeply depend on: Immigrants prepare food and bus tables in our restaurants, provide child care for working families and nursing care for elders, they are the low-wage demolition and construction crews, they landscape lawns for homes and commercial buildings, they clean houses in the daytime and offices overnight, they process the chickens and seafood we serve for dinner...and more. As a vital group of people who keep our communities functioning here, Maryland's immigrants deserve some basic respect not fear-mongering by our legislature.

For over a decade, federal policy explicitly 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, our federal government targets immigrants to score political points within a MAGA agenda. An infinitesimal number of total immigrants in Maryland are “criminals”, yet they are demonized as a group by our national leaders and their ethno-nationalist supporters.

Immigrant children, adults and elders deserve fundamental safety and peace of mind while children are in school during the day and participating in after-school programming on County property. Or when they or family members are patients in hospitals. Or worshipping in their faith communities.

SB0828 ensures that Maryland law would treat human beings who are immigrants here with a very basic level of human decency

For all of the reasons above, I ask you to uphold our best collective values in Maryland and vote to support SB 828