



Testimony of the Montgomery County Young Democrats before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee in Support of SB 828—Protecting Sensitive Locations Act

February 19, 2025

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

The Montgomery County Young Democrats (MCYD) are pleased to offer **a favorable testimony in strong support of SB 828 - Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act).**

The Montgomery County Young Democrats strive to further the aims of liberal progressivism with a particular focus on engaging and representing young voices in politics. Immigrants are a central part of our young community. [Nearly 40% of all recent immigrants to Maryland decide to settle in Montgomery County](#), with these individuals being [disproportionately more likely to have young children compared to the average resident](#). MCYD strives to make our community welcoming of all people, regardless of their background. I myself was born in Venezuela, and it was Maryland that gave my family and I a second chance after my nation of birth descended into crisis. Today, my family has the honor of being citizens, taxpayers, neighbors, and friends. It is our duty to leave the door of opportunity open for all, which is why it is a privilege to write testimony in support of this legislation.

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.

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 cannot imagine my family debating whether to take me to the doctor out of fear of never being able to come back home. I cannot imagine my grandmother having to choose every Sunday between her allegiance to God and her own safety because she may be detained during her most intimate spiritual moments. I cannot imagine my brother being forced to sacrifice his education because he doesn't want to return to a country he has never consciously experienced before in his life. These are the choices that many of our fellow Marylanders are being forced to make—yet with this bill they won't have to make these decisions.

SB 828 requires Maryland's Attorney General to develop guidelines about immigration enforcement at these sensitive locations and requires state agencies that operate at these locations to adopt guidelines, to protect immigrants.

The Montgomery County Young Democrats stand with immigrant communities and support the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act because it will:

1. **Protect Access to Essential Services:** No one should have to choose between life-saving medical care and the risk of family separation. Children deserve to attend school without fear, and individuals must be able to seek justice in our courts without the threat of detention.
2. **Enhance Public Safety:** When immigrants feel safe accessing services and reporting crimes, our entire community benefits. Fear of enforcement discourages individuals from cooperating with law enforcement, which in turn hampers public safety efforts.
3. **Strengthen Community Trust:** By establishing clear boundaries for immigration enforcement, we foster trust between immigrant communities and the institutions meant to serve them. This trust is essential for maintaining a healthy, vibrant, and cohesive society.

The Montgomery County Young Democrats urge the Committee to provide a favorable report on SB 828/HB 1006.

Sincerely,



Carlos Hernandez Tavares