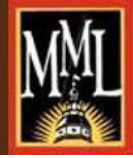




Prince George's County Municipal Association

An Association of 27 Municipalities



Testimony Favorable SUPPORT for Senate Bill 828

Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee
February 19, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. The Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) writes on behalf of the 27 municipalities that collectively represent more than 955,000 residents, to share our strong support for Senate Bill 828 Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)

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. There shouldn't be a reason why our residents should fear being in the communities a place that is home, where they contribute through paying taxes, volunteering and more.

Prince George's Municipal Association (PGCMA) stands with immigrant communities and supports 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.

Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) urges the committee to provide a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 828

Sincerely,

Celina R. Benitez

Mayor Celina R. Benitez, President, Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA)

Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) members: Berwyn Heights, Bladensburg, Bowie, Brentwood, Capitol Heights, Cheverly, College Park, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, District Heights, Eagle Harbor, Edmonston, Fairmount Heights, Forest Heights, Glenarden, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, Landover Hills, Laurel, Morningside, Mount Rainier, New Carrollton, North Brentwood, Riverdale Park, Seat Pleasant, University Park, and Upper Marlboro.