

## **Testimony on HB 1222 - Favorable with Amendments**

HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

March 27, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, and Members of the Committee,

Today I ask for your favorable vote with amendments for the Maryland Values Act.

I have lived in Frederick County for many years. I regret to say we are one of Maryland Counties with a 287 g agreement, one whose Sheriff has spent years declaring his partnership with ICE has kept us safe from an invasion of criminals from Central America. His harsh rhetoric earned him Fox News title the Joe Arpaio of the East, the Arizona Sheriff who under the agreement made unlawful attacks on immigrants. Frederick County's Sheriff signed the 287 g agreement in 2008. By 2016 there were only a handful of agreements across the county –32 of over 3000 agencies.

Deportations under 287 g largely disproved the argument that the County was under an alarming threat of serious crime from Hispanic residents. In fact Frederick County Sheriff's Office statistics show since 2008 80 % of detainees placed on arrestees in the jail were for minor level 3 offenses or misdemeanors and 60% were for traffic violations

And it is apparent that the 287 g agreement resulted from significant distrust of Hispanic residents. A 2017 study of county traffic arrests showed Hispanic residents experienced more arrests than would have been expected without the agreement . Further a 2019 Madrano ruling and the earlier De Santis ruling against the Sheriff's department for unlawful detentions of immigrants support the claims of bias expressed by residents. These facts and actions show that 287 g agreements have significant costs and one of these is a mistrust of law enforcement amongst many Hispanics both those with and without legal status.

Here we are now under a massive costly national campaign to deport millions of undocumented immigrants all across the country. The offensive has begun. It was reported Monday at a public meeting in Frederick that since Tuesday until tomorrow federal ICE agents in unmarked cars without uniforms are conducting field operations in Washington and Frederick Counties. The size of this Deportation Operation will require resources beyond the billion just requested from Congress. Thus the 287 g agreements

can be expected to expand . They were initially set up to include putting local officers on the street to make stops and arrests as ICE agents. Because of the widespread abuses by local officers this program was shelved in 2012. Just think what this will mean for public safety on our streets –both its effect and costs when sheriffs and police chiefs can under 287 g become on the street enforcers. Note that they have the authority to enter into 287 agreements: They do not have to have the agreement of the government entity for which they serve.

I urge Judiciary to pass this bill with amendments. We are experiencing a time when the federal government has moved to impose enormous costs on tax payers and on states and local governments for its deportation policies. Heretofore immigration law enforcement has been a federal not a local responsibility and this norm is under threat.

Sincerely,

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