



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony – HB 1222 - Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act) - FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Delegate Clippinger, Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee
From: Jim Caldiero, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of MD,
Lead Advocate, Immigration
Date: February 27, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on **HB 1222, Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)** that will end Section 287g Interservice Governmental Agreements (287g Agreements) between the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and local law enforcement agencies in Maryland. **We ask for a favorable report with amendments offered by CASA.**

As you may know, Section 287g of the Immigration and Nationality Act allows local entities to collaborate with the federal government to enforce federal immigration laws.

Maryland's Attorney General Anthony Brown's recently issued guidance to law enforcement clearly acknowledges that the negotiated Memoranda of Agreements (MOA) between ICE and local law enforcement agencies contradict Maryland law enforcement practices. For example, ICE MOAs deputize local law enforcement officers to ascertain an individual's immigration status. However, Attorney General Brown's guidance notes that officers cannot inquire about immigration status unless it is relevant to a criminal investigation, are not required to share immigration/citizenship status with federal officials, and may not extend detentions to investigate immigration status. In addition, Howard County's Liberty Act also precludes ANY county employee from inquiring about citizenship status, not only law enforcement.

Moreover, participation in 287g agreements is disadvantageous to Maryland and its residents. The program is fraught with unconstitutional racial and ethnic profiling.

For example:

- A 2011 federal Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation determined that Arizona's Maricopa County Sheriff's Office had conducted routine sweeps in Latino neighborhoods and that Latino drivers were nine times more likely to be stopped than non-Latino drivers.
- A DOJ investigation in North Carolina found that Latino drivers were more than 10 times more likely to be stopped than non-Latino drivers.
- A 2022 study by Texas A&M University found that these discriminatory practices among agencies with 287g agreements spilled over into surrounding non--287g agreement jurisdictions.

- The Migration Policy Institute found that half of all detainees were for people who had committed misdemeanors and traffic offenses.
- A University of North Carolina study found that officers under 287g agreements primarily targeted offenders who posed no threat to public safety or had no criminal records.

I may not be an attorney—but I studied constitutional law and history in graduate school—and it is obvious that the practices of local law enforcement agencies participating in 287g agreements violate due process protections by apprehending residents and detaining and transporting them to ICE without any hearing before a judge. As noted, individuals with no criminal background—or only misdemeanor violations—are caught up in this questionable deportation quagmire. Local resources, that could be better spent on patrols and the enforcement of serious crimes, may be diverted to the apprehension of individuals who have committed traffic violations.

Are we sure this is an effective use of law enforcement resources?

My faith, which I share with more than 4000 Unitarian Universalists in Maryland, calls me to promote and affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to seek justice, equity and compassion in human relations. Because 287g programs are filled with racial and ethnic profiling, and expend resources targeting individuals who have no criminal records, the participation of local law enforcement in the 287g program is in clear contradiction to my Unitarian Universalist moral values and the values that are shared by Marylanders in our Declaration of Rights.

I encourage you to VOTE IN FAVOR of HB 1222 to End 287g Agreements.

Thank you,
 Jim Caldiero,
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Sources:

Maryland AG Brown Press Release,

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/012725a.pdf>

American Immigration Council, 287g Program Overview,

<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/287g-program-immigration>

Texas A&M Study, <https://scholarship.law.tamu.edu/facscholar/1555/>

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