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TESTIMONY ON HB#0653 - POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
Correctional Services - Transfers to Federal Authorities - Undocumented Immigrants
(Protecting Marylanders From Violent Offenders Act of 2025)

TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony opposing HB#/0653, Correctional Services - Transfers to Federal Authorities - Undocumented Immigrants (Protecting Marylanders From Violent Offenders Act of 2025)

This bill does not seem to match its title classification on “Violent Offenders”. An undocumented person may be confined in a facility for a crime against property such as theft that was NOT a violent crime. The ACLU Immigrants Rights Project has documented: ¹

Over the past several years, states and localities around the country have increasingly considered and used state and local laws to impose criminal penalties on undocumented immigrants. At the same time, the federal government has increasingly chosen to criminally prosecute individuals who enter or reenter the United States illegally rather than rely on the extensive civil enforcement scheme under the federal immigration laws.

This unequal treatment means undocumented immigrants are arrested and convicted at much higher rates than other groups in our population. This bill is an attempt to further the mistreatment of immigrants by giving US DHS more power to continue that conduct. It fails to consider any mitigating factors in favor of treating immigrant populations as inherently violent criminals needing removal in all cases from the community.

The bill reflects the Project 2025 plans to use local resources to supplement Federal resources in carrying out mass deportations for all immigrants. It would accomplish this aim through requiring a State or local correctional facility with custody of an undocumented immigrant who is serving a sentence in the facility for conviction of a crime, on request of the United States Department of Homeland Security, to transfer the undocumented immigrant to the United States Department of Homeland Security under certain circumstances.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on HB0653.