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**Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
HB-1006: Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations- Guidelines and Policies
(Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)
Position: Favorable**

February 20, 2025

The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair
Judiciary Committee
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, Maryland: Room #100, Taylor House Office Building,
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401
cc: Members, Judiciary Committee

My name is Jordy Diaz, and I am an Organizer with Young People for Progress (YPP), a member-based civic and social justice organization of youth and young adults in Montgomery County. Our membership includes high school students, some of whom are undocumented or have family members who are undocumented. We strongly support the introduction of HB-1006, the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act, which is essential for ensuring that all Maryland residents—especially young people in our schools—can access critical services without fear of immigration enforcement actions.

The Protecting Sensitive Locations Act will establish clear guidelines restricting Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from conducting enforcement actions in certain protected spaces, including schools, hospitals, courthouses, places of worship, and other vital community spaces. These protections are necessary to uphold public safety, ensure access to essential services, and prevent the erosion of trust between immigrant communities and the institutions designed to serve them.

For over a decade, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognized the importance of limiting immigration enforcement actions in sensitive locations. However, the recent rollback of these protections under the Trump administration has created widespread fear among immigrant communities. Without these safeguards, individuals may avoid seeking medical care, reporting crimes, attending school, or accessing social services—actions that undermine public health, safety, and justice for all Maryland residents.

As an organization committed to justice and equity, we have seen firsthand the harm inflicted when young people and their families feel unsafe in their communities. In Montgomery County, students experience deep fear and anxiety simply by attending school, constantly worried that their families could be torn apart at any moment. This stress not only affects their academic performance but also takes a toll on their mental health and overall well-being. Research shows that heightened immigration enforcement has a chilling effect on school climates, leading to increased absenteeism, declines in academic achievement, and trauma that reverberates throughout classrooms—even affecting non-immigrant peers.¹ Moreover, the pervasive fear erodes trust between students, families, and teachers, making it harder for school personnel to effectively assess and respond to student needs.

¹ The 74. (2024). The Real Costs of ICE Raids at Schools and What Educators Should Do. Retrieved from <https://www.the74million.org/article/the-real-costs-of-ice-raids-at-schools-and-what-educators-should-do/#::-:text=First%2C%20we%20know%20from%20research,classroom%2C%20even%20affecting%20non%2Dimmigrant>

The provisions of HB-1006 are not only compassionate but also practical. When immigrant communities are made to fear engagement with institutions, public safety and social cohesion suffer. Law enforcement officials, healthcare providers, and educators have all underscored the importance of ensuring that immigrants feel secure in accessing essential services. This bill reaffirms Maryland's commitment to protecting all its residents by ensuring that our schools, hospitals, courthouses, and places of worship remain places of safety and support.

Further, studies have documented how local immigration enforcement policies lead to significant declines in Hispanic student enrollment. Research by CEPA (Center for Education Policy Analysis) found that ICE partnerships with local law enforcement agencies resulted in a nearly 10% decrease in Hispanic student enrollment within two years, displacing over 300,000 students nationwide. These policies disproportionately impact younger students, creating long-term educational and developmental consequences for affected children.²

We urge you to consider the profound human and community costs of policies that instill fear in our immigrant communities. By passing HB-1006, Maryland can reaffirm its commitment to inclusion, fairness, and the well-being of all its residents. It is imperative that we create a safe, supportive environment in our schools and public institutions, one where every student can thrive without the burden of fear. I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB-1006.

Sincerely,

Jordy Diaz
Organizer, Young People for Progress

² Dee, T.S., & Murphy, M. (2018). Vanished Classmates: The Effects of Local Immigration Enforcement on School Enrollment (CEPA Working Paper No.18-18). Retrieved from Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis: <http://cepa.stanford.edu/wp18-18>

