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TO: Delegate Luke H. Clippinger, Chair  
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair  
House Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Centro SOL

DATE: February 25, 2025

**HB 1222**  
**Favorable with**  
**Amendments**

**Centro SOL offers a favorable with amendment testimony in support of HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act).**

Centro SOL (Center for Health and Opportunity for Latinos at Johns Hopkins) is committed to promoting equity in health and advancing high quality care to all of our patients including the large and growing Latino population in the State of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of **HB 1222**. Note: This testimony does not necessarily represent the views of Johns Hopkins University.

At its core, this bill is about upholding Maryland’s values—fairness, dignity, and justice for all. The Maryland Values Act affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or funneling state and local resources into a federal deportation agenda. Instead, Maryland should stand firm in its commitment to community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law - by ending 287(g).

The 287(g) program has a well-documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detentions. By deputizing local law enforcement as immigration agents, it diverts them from their primary role of protecting public safety, eroding trust (especially among immigrant communities). This distrust discourages individuals from reporting crimes or seeking help, ultimately making communities less safe. Ending 287(g) ensures Maryland’s resources are used to foster public safety rather than advance federal deportation efforts.

The program’s tactics create a pervasive climate of fear, discouraging individuals from seeking medical care, participating in community programs, pursuing education, or accessing legal and law enforcement resources. This fear is particularly evident in healthcare settings, where many Latino immigrants in Baltimore are now hesitant to seek medical care, leading to increased appointment cancellations and untreated health conditions that pose risks to both individuals and public health.

Schools, traditionally safe spaces for children, are also affected. Fear that local law enforcement may collaborate with ICE has led to heightened anxiety among students and parents. Some parents have preemptively provided teachers with copies of their children’s legal documents, while others are keeping their children home, resulting in declining school attendance and reduced academic focus. Educators report that fear and uncertainty among students make it difficult to provide effective instruction.

Historically, places of worship have served as sanctuaries for immigrants. However, concerns about ICE enforcement have eroded trust, discouraging families from participating in community programs that support

their physical and mental well-being. Centro SOL, which hosts programs in Baltimore churches, has already seen a decline in participation due to these fears.

Ultimately, coordination between ICE and local law enforcement exacerbates fear within Baltimore's Latino immigrant community, harming public health, education, and overall safety. To build a stronger, more inclusive community, policies like 287(g) must be eliminated.

**Amendment Recommendation:** As part of the Maryland Immigrant Justice Table, we urge the removal of Sections 9-309(A), 9-309(B) and 5-104(5). These provisions mandate detention and transfer, which courts and the Maryland Attorney General have flagged as likely unconstitutional, exposing local governments to potential liability. Holding individuals past their scheduled release for civil immigration matters violates individuals' constitutional rights, making it unlawful and inefficient resulting in wasted state resources. Maryland must uphold due process and disentangle immigration enforcement from the criminal justice system.

**Centro SOL urges the committee to provide a favorable report with amendments on HB 1222.**

**Signatures:**

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