

## Testimony on HB 1222 - Favorable with Amendments

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

House Judiciary Committee

February 27, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and Members of the Committee,

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

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. It diverts local law enforcement from their primary duty of protecting public safety, forcing them to act as immigration agents rather than community protectors. This erodes trust, particularly among immigrant communities, making people less likely to report crimes or seek help when needed. Ending 287(g) ensures Maryland's resources are used to foster public safety—not help the federal deportation agenda.

These programs to be destructive to the social fabric in general regardless of whether it targets a specific class of people or not. The law should be applied equally to all humans and creating extra categories of law to punish individuals for behaviors that show no discernible harm to people only degrades public trust and community cohesion. Any negative behaviors that immigrants may perform are subject to the same already existing laws that apply to all people. I find the creation of a class of people that are inherently the "other" to be disgusting in the extreme and should be concerning to all Americans. Today the "illegal" are Hispanic immigrants, but who will it be tomorrow? You, me? Do not allow this insanity to continue. Please work to create a society in which all people have dignity and worth.

**Amendment Recommendation:** As part of the Maryland Immigrant Justice Table, I 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. In addition to being unlawful, delayed release and transfer result in wasted state resources. Maryland must uphold due process and disentangle immigration enforcement from the criminal justice system."

**I urge the committee to provide a favorable report with amendments on HB 1222.**