

Bill Title: Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act) - HB1222
Position: SUPPORT (FAV)
To: Judiciary Committee
Date: February 27, 2025

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Erinn Camp Mansour with Quaker Voice of Maryland (QVM), a faith-based advocacy group that advocates for policies that are just, compassionate, equitable, and respectful of the inherent worth of every person and the Earth upon which we live. Quakers across Maryland shared with us their concern for immigrant protections. QVM sees HB1222 as an urgent priority in response to the ongoing use of 287(g) agreements by some jurisdictions to deputize local police in order to implement federal mass deportation policies.

Law enforcement agreements that use local law enforcement officers to enforce federal immigration law are discriminatory and a misuse of community resources. This bill terminates and prevents such 287(g) agreements that allow local police to act as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, often without adequate training or oversight. In addition, they can divert local police resources from addressing more pressing public safety concerns. Such agreements erode public trust and can result in civil rights violations, including racial profiling and targeting of individuals based on appearance rather than suspected criminal activity.

The Quaker experience of the Divine affects what we do in our personal lives, what we believe and how we work for changes in the wider world. “Testimonies” are what Quakers call the ways we have found to live and act based on our beliefs. We embrace the knowledge that all persons are children of the Divine and brothers and sisters of one another. **Our spiritual and social testimonies, including those of peace, community, integrity, and equality, lead us to submit this testimony for HB1222.**

Local law enforcement collaboration with ICE can be harmful to communities, detrimental to public safety, and violate civil rights. Underreporting crime is more common in communities where there are local collaborations with ICE for higher immigration enforcement. Crime data does not support the position that removing undocumented immigrants has any significant impact on crime, most of those deported are for non-violent minor offenses. The deportation system is racist. Black and Brown immigrants are most often targeted for deportation. Communities are safer and stronger when neighbors and local law enforcement rely on and trust each other. Peace is lost and communities are broken when these relationships fail. Distorted immigration enforcement priorities lead to unequal treatment that undermines effective local law enforcement efforts to combat crime.

Please uphold the integrity and effectiveness of local law enforcement by issuing a FAVORABLE report for HB1222. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Erinn Camp Mansour

Working Group Member, on behalf of Quaker Voice of Maryland

Organization email: quakervoicemd@gmail.com