



# LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

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Date: February 27, 2025

Re: HB1222

Position: FAVORABLE – With Amendments

STATEMENT OF  
**MAJOR STANFORD “NEILL” FRANKLIN, [i]**  
**Maryland State Police (Ret.)**  
**ON BEHALF OF THE**  
**LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP [ii]**

SUBMITTED TO  
THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
HON. LUKE CLIPPINGER, CHAIR  
HON. J. SANDY BARTLETT, VICE CHAIR

**Testimony – Favorable with Amendments**  
**HB1222 – Public Safety –**  
**Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)**

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, Distinguished Representatives, on behalf of the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), we support HB1222 and urge you to give it a favorable report because it will:

- Be effective in saving lives;
- Be effective in reducing violent crime;
- Be effective in reducing the strain upon limited law enforcement resources;
- Would encourage victims of violent crime to seek law enforcement assistance; and
- Would assist law enforcement in identifying, arresting and removing violent actors from the community.

LEAP greatly appreciates the courageous leadership in introducing this bill that benefit not just the immigrant community, but all our communities. Unfortunately, this debate continues regarding the benefits of not utilizing local law enforcement in the deportation process of members of the immigrant community who are not involved in crime. In this letter, I will explain some of the benefits in detail.

The main tasks of local law enforcement are preventing, reducing and investigating violent crime. These three tasks work in concert with each other and cannot be successful in and of themselves. General crime prevention consists of educating the public in being safe and creating an omni presence, discouraging criminals from preying upon members of the community. Be it that most crime violence is committed by a very small percentage of the population, successful criminal investigations create the most success in reducing crime and crime prevention. Although an omni presence and education can reduce opportunities of criminal acts, for the most part, it only postpones the criminal activity or moves it on to another victim. When successful investigations lead to the identification and apprehension of violent criminals, they are removed from the community, no longer available to prey upon members of the public, producing the greatest result in overall crime reduction.

Successful criminal investigations into violent crime require many things, but one extremely important component is witness and victim cooperation. Before a crime can even be investigated, we, the police, need to know that the crime has been committed. Whether a robbery, home invasion, rape, domestic violence, or human trafficking, someone (e.g. the victim) needs to report it. If a victim, or even the relative of a victim, is fearful in coming to the authorities to report a crime, the investigation into the crime and therefore the suspect never occurs, leaving the culprit to continually prey upon the same victim and others. As a result, not only is the victim still at risk, but other members of the community remain at risk, and such culprits also commit crimes outside of the immigrant community.

The authorities (police and others in government) must be seen as friends of, and not threats to, the law-abiding immigrant community. HB1222 will ensure that local law enforcement not only focus its limited resources upon the violent criminals within our communities, but it will also ensure that a high level of trust is maintained between the police and the immigrant community, trust that is necessary for the protection of the public and improving public safety.

In 2011 I volunteered my time and expertise to the University of Maryland School of Law for an immigration case they were mitigating. Four (4) members of the Baltimore immigrant community had been illegally detained and turned over to ICE by a Maryland Transportation Authority police officer. Three (3) of the men were in a disabled vehicle and the fourth was called to assist. The men had committed no traffic violations and had no criminal records, yet they were detained, handcuffed and eventually transported to the downtown Baltimore ICE office where they were turned over to federal authorities. This detention of non-violent immigrant community members took three (3) police officers off our streets for a combined total of ten (10) man hours, resulting in no increased safety for Marylanders.

In addition to maintaining community trust, our police officers should not be wasting valuable time and resources detaining non-violent productive members of the immigrant community. HB1222 will ensure that police officers are not only made aware of the policies going forward, but that they understand the overall benefits of the Maryland Values Act in reducing violent crime.

Understanding how aggressive some police officers can be in following policies, the complexities of federal immigration law can lead to the inadvertent detention of U.S. citizens, resulting in expensive lawsuits for Maryland jurisdictions and taxpayers. As we know, many U.S. citizens speak broken English, and citizens are not required to carry identification. Citizens are also not required to identify themselves to law enforcement if there is no articulable suspicion that they have committed a crime. You don't need much of an imagination to see where this can lead when a police officer thinks that someone, they engage on the street, is in the country illegally. We need only to look at our own Frederick County, where such cases have been acted out upon the streets at the hands of the Frederick County Sheriff's Office.

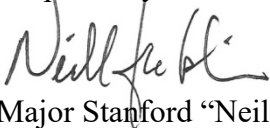
On July 7, 2018, Sara Medrano was driving with her daughter and grandchildren when two Frederick sheriff's deputies stopped her, purportedly for a broken taillight, and questioned where she was from and what her immigration status was. Then the deputies unlawfully tried to hold her for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in violation of the Fourth Amendment. When Ms. Medrano finally returned home, she realized that her taillight was working just fine and that the deputies, in fact, stopped and questioned her because she was Latina.

The Frederick County Sheriff's Office has harassed other members of the RISE Coalition, unlawfully targeting and questioning them for suspected immigration violations, including the targeting of Latinx U.S. citizens. Sheriff Jenkins has even called the recipients of the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") program "hardcore gangbangers."

In closing 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."

We must have policies that encourage all victims of crime to step forward and report those crimes. At the same time, we must also have policies that enable us to properly deal with those who prey upon vulnerable members of society and not squander valuable law enforcement resources. HB1222, the Maryland Values Act, will do all the above, therefore, I ask that you give it a favorable report with the above amendments.

Respectfully,



Major Stanford "Neill" Franklin (Ret.)

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[i] Major Neill Franklin (Ret.) is a distinguished figure in law enforcement, boasting a remarkable 34-year career that includes notable positions within both the Maryland State Police and the Baltimore Police Department. Franklin's extensive service began with the Maryland State Police, where he dedicated 23 years of his life to public safety. His exceptional performance led him to be selected in 2000 by the Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department to reconstruct and lead the Education and Training Section in Baltimore.

Throughout his tenure with the Maryland State Police, Franklin made significant contributions, notably serving as the commander of the Education and Training Division and the Bureau of Drug and Criminal Enforcement. He was instrumental in the creation and oversight of the first Domestic Violence Investigative Units for the Maryland State Police, showcasing his commitment to progressive policing practices.

Franklin's perspective on the War on Drugs was profoundly shaped by the community impacts he witnessed during his career. Influenced by former Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, who famously criticized the drug war's violent repercussions, Franklin became a staunch advocate for reform. This commitment was further fueled by the heartbreaking loss of his close friend, Maryland State Police Corporal Ed Toatley, who was killed during an undercover drug operation. This tragedy solidified his resolve to challenge and change ineffective drug policies.

In 2010, Franklin transitioned from active duty to leadership as the Executive Director of the Law Enforcement Action Partnership, a role he held for a decade until his retirement in 2020. Under his guidance, the organization worked towards reshaping public safety strategies and advocating for reformative approaches to drug policy.

Franklin's expertise in policing has also been recognized in judicial settings, where he has served as an expert witness in both Maryland Circuit and federal district courts. His commitment to community engagement and reform extends beyond his professional duties; he has held positions on various boards, including the Youth & Police Initiative, the Alliance for Safety and Justice, the National Organization of Retired State Troopers, the Faith Based Community Council on Law Enforcement and Intelligence, and TurnAround Inc. among others.

Through his extensive service and advocacy, Major Neill Franklin has made a lasting impact on law enforcement practices and community safety initiatives, demonstrating a profound commitment to justice and reform.

[ii] The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEA) is a nonprofit group of police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety and working toward healing police-community relations.