



# NIGERIANS IN FREDERICK

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**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,

The Association of Nigerians in Frederick (NIF) offers a **favorable with amendment** testimony in support of **HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)**.

NIF is an established 501c3 non-profit organization that has been in existence since 2005. A part of our mission is to build partnerships within the Frederick community through community service, outreach and partnerships. We have partnered with many immigrant serving organizations in Frederick County in advocating for immigrants living and working in the county. We conduct education and outreach events for immigrant communities through programming to ensure immigrants know their rights, are aware of resources available to them, and can participate in exercising their civic duties within the community.

We became aware of 287(g) in Frederick County when one of our members worked as an officer in the Frederick County Sherriff's Office (FCSO). He was instrumental in educating members of our community about the unintended consequences of the FCSO partnership with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. We have had about a dozen members who have been directly impacted by 287(g). The most recent was a gentleman who was stopped for a broken taillight along U.S. Route 40 on his way to work as a nurse. Even though he wore his scrubs, he was delayed for over 30 minutes as the officer was checking on his documents and questioning him about his documentation status. This is one of several examples of how members of the immigrant community are profiled under 287(g).

As an organization, one of the main reasons we would like to see this bill pass is due to the negative consequences 287(g) has had on members of our immigrant community. We believe everyone should have a right to live without fear in our community. Being pulled over by a law enforcement officer is nerve racking, and having to contend with 287(g) further adds to the fear, regardless of an immigrant person's documentation status. We have had instances where couples in a domestic violence situation are afraid to involve law enforcement for fear of being victims to 287(g). 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.

**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. 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.”

The Association of Nigerians in Frederick urges the committee to provide a favorable report with amendments on HB1222. Thank you for your consideration of the amendment to the bill.

Sincerely,

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