



TESTIMONY FOR HB1222 Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Williams

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1222 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members are steadfast in their resistance to the involvement of Maryland state and local law enforcement agents in federal immigration enforcement activities. The bill seeks to ensure that state and local resources are not used to enforce federal immigration laws, thereby protecting the rights and safety of all residents, regardless of their immigration status. Additionally, the bill prohibits the state, local governments, county sheriffs, and their agents from entering into immigration enforcement agreements with federal authorities while mandating the termination of any existing agreements by July 1, 2025.

By limiting the involvement of state and local law enforcement in federal immigration enforcement, the bill aims to build trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement, encouraging cooperation and reporting of crimes. This can lead to safer communities overall. Furthermore, the bill ensures that state and local resources are focused on public safety priorities rather than federal immigration enforcement, promoting a more efficient and just use of resources.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and other legislation that treats law-abiding immigrants with the fairness all Marylanders deserve. We believe that by prioritizing the well-being and rights of every resident, we can foster a more inclusive and secure community for everyone.

Amendment Recommendation: 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 Maryland Legislative Coalition wholeheartedly supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.