

## **Testimony in Favor of HB1006**

### **HB 1006- Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)**

February 27, 2025

House Judiciary Committee

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

I am offering a favorable testimony in strong support of HB1006, Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act).

I live in Howard County and am part of an Interfaith Refugee Ministry which is helping resettle 8 families. I also am a part of a new Maryland Lutheran Immigration task force. I have been helping to resettle 4 refugee families from Syria and Afghanistan in our community. I have also volunteered with Luminus in helping immigrant families from Mexico and Central America settle into their new lives here in Maryland.

Though all these families entered the United States legally, there is a strong current of fear running through the immigrant and refugee communities. Some of these families have been here for years awaiting steps to obtain their permanent resident status; some have this but are waiting for the time when they may apply for citizenship. Many families are nervous about the climate in our country to find and deport immigrants. As you may know, some legislators from other states have sought legislation to offer “bounties” for citizens to turn in immigrants. With the executive orders and accompanying rhetoric, people are afraid they will be picked up and their rights not upheld. I was an English Language Teacher (ELL) in Indiana during the Obama administration’s wave of deportations. We had to pass state law to prevent ICE agents from sitting outside our schools and sitting in the parking lots of worship buildings.

No one in Maryland (the whole country) should fear that immigration enforcement officials may threaten them when they seek medical care, attend school or attend worship services. This bill directs the Maryland Attorney General, along with appropriate stakeholders, to assist public schools, hospitals and courthouses to establish guidelines that limit immigration enforcement activities on their premises so that these facilities as well as places of worship, remain safe and accessible to all.

My congregation, New Hope Lutheran Church, just held a meeting on this issue. We would never wish to see immigration enforcement officials come to our building in attempt to apprehend people.

Congress's inability to craft and pass reasonable legislation regarding immigration, the Dreamers, and others, who've carved out a life here, should not mean we deny their safe access to medical care, to an education, and to worship as they please.

Thank you.

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