

February 25, 2025



Dr. Anna Rubin
Columbia, MD 21045

Testimony on HB 1222 - Favorable with Amendments
HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

To: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Dr. Anna Rubin, on behalf of JUFJ

I am writing on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) to urge you to return a **favorable report, with amendments, on HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)**. JUFJ organizes 6,000 Jewish Marylanders and allies from across the state in support of social, racial, and economic justice. JUFJ has worked in past years in coalition with various groups to pass legislation that permitted undocumented immigrants: 1) the right to get a driver's license; 2) access to Medicaid for pregnant people; 3) access to Maryland Health Connection. Further, JUFJ helped organize the successful opposition to Howard County's IGSA agreement which permitted detained immigrants to be held in its county jail.

At its core, HB1222 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. The program has been costly for localities, has historically targeted individuals with little or no criminal history, and has harmed the relationship between police and local communities.

Amendment Recommendation: As part of the Maryland Immigrant Justice Table, on behalf of JUFJ, 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.

On behalf of JUFJ, I **urge the committee to provide a favorable report, with amendments, on HB I222.**