



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 1222 – Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

DATE: February 27, 2025
COMMITTEE: House Judiciary Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **HB 1222 – Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)** a favorable report.

This legislation aims to address concerns about conflicting federal, state, and local policies regarding immigration enforcement, in part by eliminating the use of local “immigration enforcement agreements” such as the harmful 287(g) program.

As the federal landscape has changed, we have seen more intense and public immigration enforcement. While immigration enforcement is necessary, these practices can sometimes hurt those who are legal residents, and cause trauma to the community. This is particularly prevalent when state and local law enforcement agents enforce federal immigration laws directly.

Frederick County is proud to have a vibrant immigrant community that contributes to making our county diverse and inclusive. It is well known that 287(g) agreements have led to racial profiling and discrimination across the State. When local law enforcement agents enforce federal immigration laws directly, our jurisdictions become less safe due to an erosion of public trust in police. These practices intimidate our residents and prevent them from trusting and interacting with our law enforcement, even as witnesses or potential victims of crime. We cannot have safe and secure communities if our residents do not feel safe around our local law enforcement.

HB 1222 would not only assist in ensuring local trust in law enforcement, but also in ensuring our local resources are being used in the most efficient way. Immigration enforcement agreements are often an impediment to targeting violent crime as they are focused on individuals at local detention centers at the point of booking. This means that the program primarily impacts offenders of low-level crime and does not prioritize high level offenders that pose a danger to our community. These agreements are also unfunded and bring unnecessary confusion when conflicting with state and federal laws, resulting in an inefficient use of county resources. The elimination of these agreements will allow for more efficient services and safer communities.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1222. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.

Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD