

To: Judiciary Committee  
Re: HB 1006 Protecting Sensitive Locations Act  
From: Elaine S. Wilson  
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FAV

I am co-clerk of Friends Meeting of Washington, a Quaker Meeting in Washington DC, which is a member of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, the umbrella organization of Quaker Meetings in this region. I live in Silver Spring, MD as do many members of my faith community. In my letter to the Washington Post published on Tuesday February 5, I declared my objection to the new presidential administrations policies on immigration as being at odds with the core ethics of the prophetic Jewish tradition and the teachings of Jesus.

Friends Meetings all over the state regularly welcome anyone who chooses to come worship with us. We recognize that there is a divine light in each person and so each life is sacred and worthy of our care. We are a community with no clergy—every member present is in effect clergy to each other. There are several members of our Meeting who are no longer comfortable coming to worship with us in light of the new presidential actions on immigration. This means that we as a community are deprived of the ministry that they offer us when they are present with us.

I write in support of HB1006 (SB828) Protecting Sensitive Locations Act. No one should hesitate to go to an emergency room, attend worship services or go to school or college for fear of immigration enforcement. Schools, houses of worship, hospitals and courthouses should be able to establish policies that limit immigration enforcement on their premises. We at Friends Meeting of Washington are developing such policies for our own building and will not allow ICE or other federal agents to enter the building for enforcement work.

As a faith leader, I feel called to speak on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves. Our faith community is enriched by the presence of all who seek the direction of the divine in communal worship. When our friends and neighbors are afraid to join us, our worship is diminished. If we have not reached out our hand to help them when they are afraid and in need, we will surely be called to account.

Sincerely,

Elaine S. Wilson