



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies (Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)

Bill Number(s): [HB1006](#)

Position: FAVORABLE

Date: February 25, 2025

Submitted by: Director Jeremy Browning on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Judiciary Committee

The Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair
The Hon. J. Sandy Bartlett

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission is in strong support of HB1006, the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act, a necessary measure to uphold fundamental human rights, safeguard community trust, and prevent the unnecessary harm caused by immigration enforcement in spaces where people seek safety and support.

Sensitive locations, including healthcare facilities, places of worship, schools, and community service centers, are essential spaces where individuals, regardless of immigration status, should be able to access critical services without fear of enforcement actions. For LGBTQIA+ immigrants, particularly transgender and nonbinary individuals, these protections are even more urgent.

National data from the [2022 U.S. Transgender Survey](#) underscores the heightened risks of discrimination, violence, and barriers to essential services faced by transgender individuals. Additionally, the [Maryland Trans Survey](#) found that a significant percentage of transgender Marylanders experience verbal harassment, threats, and physical violence. Fear of discrimination often prevents transgender and LGBTQIA+ immigrants from accessing healthcare, law enforcement, and community resources. For LGBTQIA+ individuals without legal immigration status, these challenges are even greater, as the threat of immigration enforcement discourages them from seeking medical care, reporting crimes, or utilizing social services.

The recent case reported in the Baltimore Banner of [April Amaya-Luis](#), a transgender woman from Kent County, exemplifies why this bill is essential. Amaya-Luis, who is without legal immigration status but legally married to a U.S. citizen and had filed for legal status, was arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement after complying with a routine probation check-in. Instead of being released pending her immigration case, she was transferred to an ICE detention facility in Miami, where she was housed with men despite legal documentation confirming her gender as female. This egregious violation of her rights reflects a broader pattern of discrimination and targeted enforcement against transgender immigrants, who already face heightened vulnerabilities. Cases like Amaya-Luis' make clear that LGBTQIA+ individuals without legal immigration status, especially transgender women, need legal protections ensuring their access to sensitive locations without fear of detention or deportation.

By ensuring that immigration enforcement actions do not occur in places like hospitals, schools, shelters, and places of worship, this bill protects public health and safety by ensuring individuals feel safe seeking medical care, mental health support, and emergency services. It encourages community trust in state institutions, allowing immigrants, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, to seek help when needed.

LGBTQIA+ immigrants are part of the fabric of Maryland. They are our neighbors, friends, and colleagues. Ensuring that they can safely access schools, healthcare, and community spaces without fear of enforcement is not just a matter of policy; it is a reflection of our values as a state that is committed to equity and inclusion.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs urges a favorable report on HB1006.

References:

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National Center for Transgender Equality. (2022). *U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS)*. <https://ustranssurvey.org/>

Pease, M. V., Taylor, S., Blinder, L., Clements, Z. A., & Galupo, M. P. (2024, March). Initial findings from the Maryland Trans Survey. Trans Maryland. <https://transmaryland.org/findings>