



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony

HB 639 – Transportation - Aviation - Passenger Health and Safety (Aviation Health and Safety Act) FAVORABLE REPORT

To: Del. Marc Korman, Chair, Del. Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
From: Jim Caldiero, Lead Advocate for Immigration,
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Date: February 19, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony IN FAVOR of **HB 639 - Transportation - Aviation - Passenger Health and Safety (Aviation Health and Safety Act)** which will require the Maryland Aviation Administration to require flight crews with detained individuals aboard to complete certain confirmations and prohibit the refueling of an aircraft if an individual on board is in any kind of restraint.

I encourage you to deliver a **FAVORABLE REPORT**.

Over a six-month period, deportation flights under the current national administration have nearly doubled, totaling almost 6000. These flights are fraught with danger. ProPublica, for example, reports a not uncommon incident where a young girl on a flight to Mexico, had collapsed because she was unable to breathe, and flight attendants had to climb over rows of shackled migrants to get to her. Safety concerns are paramount as flight attendants say that while they have been trained to evacuate passengers, they have not been trained in how to remove passengers whose hands and legs are chained.

Many of the detainees have committed only a civil immigration violation, shackling them is abhorrent and contrary to my beliefs. My faith, which I share with more than 4000 Unitarian Universalists across our state, calls me to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Surely there are more humane methods available that the Maryland Aviation Administration can ensure.

Thank you.

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Shared voices for liberal religious values in Maryland

Sources:

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