

02/19/2026

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TESTIMONY ON HB#/0639 - POSITION:
FAVORABLE

Transportation - Aviation - Passenger Health and Safety (Aviation Health and Safety Act)

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB#/0639, Transportation - Aviation - Passenger Health and Safety (Aviation Health and Safety Act)

The actions of the Federal Administration during deportation flights from Maryland have demonstrated the need for this bill. It will protect the rights of persons on those flights and mandate constitutional safeguards and moral and ethical treatment as primary for those on the flights.

Among the deprivations that have been found are: ¹

- Destinations and Passengers: Flights often transported detainees to detention centers, such as those in Louisiana. Passengers included individuals targeted for removal, including some accused of gang affiliation.
- Controversies and Incidents:
 - Wrongful Deportation: In 2025, it was revealed that a Maryland man was mistakenly deported to an El Salvador prison, an action involving these deportation flights.
 - Conditions: Reports from [ICE air flights](#) (not solely in MD) described detainees, including families, being transported in shackles, with, at times, inadequate medical attention for emergencies.

This bill changes the paradigms on these flights if they occur in Maryland by requiring the Maryland Aviation Administration to develop certain passenger forms for aircraft traveling with detained individuals; requiring certain flight crews to distribute and collect certain forms; requiring certain aeronautical service providers to confirm that the forms are on board an aircraft before servicing the aircraft; prohibiting the refueling of an aircraft if an individual on board is in any kind of restraint; requiring that certain individuals who are removed from an aircraft be provided certain services; etc.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0639.

¹ Google AI Search “what occurred during deportation flights in Maryland”