

Dear **Members of the Judiciary Committee**,

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. I am a resident of District 43b. **I am testifying in support of SB0984 to add zoning requirements for private immigration detention facilities.**

This is the Senate version of HB1017, which this Committee delivered a favorable report on earlier this session and which went on to pass in the House.



Showing Up for Racial Justice

All human beings have fundamental rights and dignities that must be respected. Unfortunately, in detention facilities run by private companies, the requirement to respect the rights of the incarcerated is in direct conflict with the profit motives of those running these facilities. This is especially likely to be true when private companies are allowed to convert warehouses or other buildings not intended to house human beings into detention centers. In 2025, conditions in immigration detention facilities declined, with “worsening and substandard medical care, growing complaints of abusive conditions, and documented extensive violations of detention standards.”¹ These problems are expected to continue in 2026 as increasing demand for detention space continues to outstrip supply. Zoning regulations can help prevent these abuses from being perpetuated in Maryland.

Although Maryland has not experienced the same level of concentrated ICE action that we have recently seen in Minneapolis, recent moves by ICE to purchase and convert warehouses into detention facilities raise concerns that such a “surge” may be planned for Maryland.² Our state has a duty to safeguard our immigrant neighbors, and that must include making all possible efforts to prevent the establishment of new detention centers to fuel the ongoing terror campaign. Allowing the construction of such facilities in communities, alongside the schools, parks, and houses where people are trying to live their lives, furthers this fear and makes it even more constant.

I appreciate that you recognized the importance of this issue and returned a favorable report on HB1017. I ask that you please **vote in support of SB0984** for the same reasons.

Sincerely,

Theresa M. Hoffman

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Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore

¹ Reichlin, Aaron. “New Report Details ICE’s Expanding and Increasingly Unaccountable Detention System.” American Immigration Council, 23 January 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/ice-expanding-detention-system/>. Accessed 9 February 2026.

² Conarck, Ben, Zawodny, Daniel and Bologna, Giacomo. “Feds purchase warehouse near Hagerstown, fueling talk of immigration detention center.” The Baltimore Banner, 27 January 2026, https://www.thebanner.com/politics-power/national-politics/federal-government-buys-hagerstown-warehouse-immigration-detention-VAHWF3IP5BGJPOLUTFKSKLWFBQ/?utm_content=bc_mr. Accessed 10 February 2026.