

## Testimony on House Bill – Favorable

### HB1017 Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement

#### House Judiciary Committee

February 9, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee:

I, Amy Burcham, am writing to offer favorable testimony in support of **HB1017**. To this end, I submit the following concerns:

In 2025, ICE arrested more than 3,300 people in Maryland, more than twice the number arrested in 2024. Only one-third of those arrested had any criminal convictions. Over half had no criminal charges whatsoever. Allowing privately built detention centers to operate in Maryland will lead inevitably to the arrest of more innocent people. It raises significant ethical concerns over profiting from the act of detention, encouraging longer detentions, and cutting services (medical, food, utilities, etc.) to maximize shareholder returns.

For-profit detention lacks public accountability. This leads to poor conditions, abuse, neglect, overcrowding, poor healthcare, and family separation. Inadequate oversight, regardless of existing federal standards and civil rights law, is endemic to privately run detention facilities - and the results are well-known. On paper, ICE mandates certain standards, but enforcement of these standards is well-known to be weak; indeed, ICE agents have repeatedly ignored the rule of law and the civil rights guaranteed to all US residents in the Constitution, including undocumented immigrants. Allowing such an organization to scale up and outsource its operation in the face of such well-documented cruelty implicates all Maryland citizens in its perpetuation.

Private detention centers create fear and distrust in our community. They make people afraid to go to work, take their children to school, and shop for basic necessities. More than one in six Maryland residents are immigrants. Many have lived here for decades, work in the community, pay taxes, and contribute to our state in multiple ways. Maryland values its residents of all backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.

I urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Burcham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Amy Burcham