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TESTIMONY FOR SB0984
Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement

Bill Sponsor: Senator Smith

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Indivisible Bowie and Beyond (IBBMD)

Person Submitting: Liz Enagonio, co-founder

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony **in favor of SB0984** on behalf of Indivisible Bowie and Beyond (IBBMD). IBBMD is a group of several hundred grassroots activists in Bowie and surrounding areas in Prince George's County, working to bring justice, equality, and people-centric legislation to Maryland.

IBBMD supports SB0984 because loopholes in current Maryland law permit municipalities to approve Immigrant Detention Centers without proper zoning requirements. We already see Washington County circumventing the Maryland ban on detention centers by sanctioning the use of a warehouse built for storage as a detention center to house human beings. This warehouse is in an area of Washington County that is not zoned for overnight habitation. There is no plan for how DHS plans to humanely house hundreds or thousands of our FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS in a warehouse where the infrastructure is likely not sufficient for providing water, sanitation, utilities, and adequate food for these additional people. As well, even if DHS manages to provide these services, they will strain the infrastructure in this rural area of Maryland, putting a burden on residents.

DHS has said they are not required to follow local zoning rules. But this is exactly why we have zoning: to best match services to the needs of the residents. Not only would DHS illegally detain and incarcerate fellow human beings: they would place the burden of a sudden increase in use of resources, including the added use of area roads by

federal vehicles, on our fellow Marylanders, who would bear the costs and inconvenience.

In no way should anyone condone creating concentration camps in Maryland, especially when state law expressly bans immigrant detention centers. The least we can do is require that any place where people are held, detained, or incarcerated meet basic human safety and health requirements without running roughshod over our communities and their residents. It's shameful we need to pass a law saying this, but we do.

For these reasons, IBBMD urges that you support SB0984 and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.