

February 20th, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr., Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Favorable Testimony on Senate Bill 791 (Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions [Community Trust Act])

Dear Chair Smith and Vice Chair Waldstreicher,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee's (the Committee's) February 25th consideration of SB 791, the Community Trust Act. My name is Paul Melmeyer, and I am a resident of Silver Spring, Maryland, and a constituent of Chair Smith's. I am writing in support of SB 791 – the Community Trust Act.

For over a year, I have watched as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has terrorized my neighbors, snatching longstanding community members from their families and friends. I, and most of my neighbors, have been outraged, and have done as much as we can do to prevent ICE from kidnapping more of our friends and neighbors.

We expect you, our Maryland Senators, to stand up against this hate and discrimination as well. This is why I support SB 791, and I hope you will too.

I support this bill because local jails and law enforcement across Maryland are collaborating with ICE – holding people past their release dates and notifying ICE about individuals in custody, all without a judicial warrant. This is unconstitutional, and I want Maryland to have no role in this heinous scheme.

I have actively canvassed my community, trying to ensure they know their rights if interacting with ICE and Federal law enforcement. But I have watched helplessly as ICE and their allies have broken many laws and violated the constitution, most notably forgoing judicial warrants to conduct searches and seizures.

This legislation would provide a simple fix: requiring a judicial warrant before anyone is held for ICE, and stops local officers from proactively contacting ICE about people in their custody. It does not tie the hands of the Federal government: it only ensures Maryland isn't complicit in helping them break the law.

I believe history will look back, judging the accomplices, and celebrating those who did not fall in line. For these reasons, I ask that the Committee issue a favorable recommendation.

Thank you for considering my viewpoints,

Paul Melmeyer