

Honorable Chair Barlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tatiana Santos, and I am a resident of Frederick, Maryland. I am speaking today in support of SB854.

For more than a year, we have seen federal agents acting lawlessly as they flood American cities across the country. We have witnessed them abusing their authority as they have engaged in blatant racial profiling, illegal and baseless arrests, and excessive force against people trying to live their lives.

Two months ago, I was stopped by local police in Frederick, MD for what the officer told me was “expired tags.” My tags had just been renewed and the sticker on the plate read 2029 so the fact that they were expired was disputable. After 15 minutes of exchange where the officer asked me to provide my license, my registration, and ultimately my insurance card, it was determined that there must have been a glitch in the MVA system. I was given a warning. When I got home and read my warning document, I noticed under the Race section, it listed HISPANIC in bold letters. With a 287g agreement in place at that time, it became clear that I was not stopped for expired tags, but rather for driving while Hispanic.

My situation is not unique. In my community advocacy work, a family lost their primary breadwinner when he was stopped by ICE while going to work in a white work van. We’ve seen the videos of innocent people being kidnapped by ICE while taking out the trash at a restaurant or helping a stranger who was supposedly stranded. Black and brown people are being targeted simply for how they look.

I support **SB854** because this bill restricts federal agents’ ability to engage in racial profiling or other abuses. And, by including a private cause of action, this bill ensures that its important protections are enforceable in state court.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **SB854**.