

Testimony in support of SB0988
Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitations
Public Hearing March 12, 2026

Chair William C. Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher, and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am writing to support SB0988, a bill to put limitations on stops, detentions, and arrests at state and local judicial facilities for people who are alleged, or been adjudicated, for a civil offense.

The current federal administration has been using a variety of tactics to wrongfully detain immigrants, and those who appear to be immigrants, for more than a year now. People have been detained without charges across the country at their jobs, on the street, while checking in at their immigration appointments, at naturalization ceremonies, and at their homes. This bill would keep the Department of Homeland Security from apprehending immigrants from the state and local courthouses in our state.

When people are at courthouses, they are doing their best to comply with law enforcement and the judiciary. It's criminals who are more likely to skip court appointments. Places like courthouses, hospitals, schools and faith communities need to be places where everyone feels safe.

While there are limits to Maryland's ability to contain the actions of the federal government, there are some actions that can be taken to improve the conditions for the residents of Maryland. Passing this bill and keeping DHS from abducting people from judicial centers is something that we can do as a state.

Beth Forbes
East Bethesda (D18)