

January 22, 2026
Re: SB 0245
Jo Shifrin
Bethesda, MD 20817

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL SB 0245

Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition

TO: Chair Will Smith, Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Jo Shifrin

My name is Jo Shifrin. I am a resident of Bethesda. I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill SB 0245, Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition

I am a retiree who moved to Bethesda to be near my grandchildren. My faith informs my belief about how people should treat one another. The insistence that we must behave with care, equity, and love toward the stranger is the command most repeated in the *Torah*. Our sacred texts demand that we use our own historical experiences of being outsiders in many countries into compassion for those who are experiencing that today. It is imperative for me –as a Jew and a Marylander – to make sure that those of us who were not born in our country are as safe as those of us who were.

Everyone, no matter where they were born, or what language they speak, should be able to live safely and without fear. But currently, ICE agents are assaulting, arresting, and disappearing immigrant Marylanders. They do this to terrorize communities and create divisions between us so that they can stay in power. We cannot, we must not, allow our state to participate in or enable these brutal assaults.

I truly believe that SB 0245 will benefit all Maryland residents by increasing public safety, promoting equity, and improving community and police relations. This bill will reduce community trauma, vastly improve community and police relations, and allow our police departments to deploy their officers to focus on actual crimes rather than spending time assisting ICE in terrorizing our neighbors.

I urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on SB0245.