

March 10, 2026
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TESTIMONY ON SB0984 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement

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

FROM: Julie Simon

My name is Julie Simon. I am a resident of District 43B. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0984, Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement.

For the last several years I have been the team lead for the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Welcome Circle. During that time we have lived our Jewish and civic values, welcoming two Afghan families to Baltimore County and getting to know others from the over 35 Afghan families that live in Cockeysville.

In recent months, the Trump administration has launched a racist, xenophobic and deadly campaign against immigrants across the United States, including attacking parents and families at schools and at work, deploying military equipment to terrorize communities, housing people in inadequate facilities, racially profiling U.S. citizens and shooting people. It is against this backdrop that I am writing to express my support for a favorable report on SB0984, which will prohibit the State and local governments from using a building as an immigration detention facility run by a private entity unless it is zoned for that purpose and require a use and occupancy permit for an immigration detention facility.

The immigration detention facility under development in Williamsport was built to handle packages, not human beings, and lacks adequate water, sanitation, medical, safety and food handling facilities to safely and humanely house people. As Jews, we have a long history of persecution and know importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of immigration status. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0984.**