

Testimony on SB 984 – FAVORABLE
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
March 12, 2026

Dear Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Marcia Greenberg, and I live in Lexington Park in St Mary's County. I am submitting testimony **in FAVOR OF SB 984**, supporting all efforts to ensure that innocent people who may be rounded up and abducted by ICE in the State of Maryland, or nearby states, will be held only in immigration detention facilities that are properly maintained – with safety and health standards. The requirement that zoning ordinances must explicitly provide for detention facilities is by no means radical. It makes sense, and it must be put into law THIS SESSION – as an Emergency measure.

Below is the testimony similar to that which I filed for SB 985. I urge you to pass any and all laws that will protect people of this state. We commend you, Chair Smith, for all those laws that you have sponsored. And thank you, in advance, for making sure that all of the critical laws get onto the floor with FAVORABLE committee votes – as soon as possible.

Members of the Committee: In St Mary's County, we have not yet seen ICE agents swarming our streets. But we know that such aggressive targeting could happen at any time. They could come here to detain individuals who have done nothing more than to flee violent and repressive conditions in their home countries, to seek a safe life for their families, to work hard for economic opportunity for their children, and to contribute to a civil society. Many, if not most, are church-going. Most are working hard to put food on the table – and consequently contribute to our local economy and to social security. Many support and serve our local community as employees in hotels and restaurants, in hospitals and clinics, in yard care and in many other jobs. They are the kinds of people who this country has sometimes welcomed with open arms, but has at other times (like currently), stigmatized and refused entry.

We now face a Department of Homeland Security funded with the appallingly astronomical sum of \$170 billion dollars. With such resources, some are being spent to create a gulag of private detention facilities. Members of the Committee: I am a Jewish American, and I know all too well how the Germans rounded up Jews (and others) to detain them in labor and concentration camps, and to murder millions of them. We also know what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II – an historic violation of their rights that was humiliating, economically devastating and emotionally cruel.

This DHS/ICE force is rogue and is growing. It threatens innocent people and has demonstrated a willingness or tactical intention to ignore our laws.

Members of this Committee, we need you to put into place legal mechanisms by which we can restrain those ambitions and protect civil detainees. We need you to be proactive, not reactive. The 2027 session will be too late.

Further, please enable us – private citizens who are prepared to support our immigrant neighbors – to ensure that detention facilities are not constructed in our backyards. We do not want to see Auschwitz or Dachau or Terezin in our state – in fact, anywhere in the United States. But we need you to pass state laws that enable us to fight at the local level.

Members of the Committee: We understand that during this Session you are swamped by proposed bills relating to ICE. We understand that you, like us, are being targeted by Steve Bannon’s infamous “firehose”. Please, however, make these bills your priority because they not only affect many innocent people, but are also critical for restraining a repressive force wielded by an authoritarian regime. These times are historic and the issues are existential. Please report out SB 984 **favorably** – for the sake of the many innocent individuals and families in and around the state of Maryland.

Respectfully,
Marcia Greenberg, St Mary’s County