

Testimony on SB0985: Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Minimum Mandatory Standards

Judicial Proceedings Committee

March 10, 2026

Position: Favorable

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Sarah Guroff** and I am a resident of **Hagerstown**, MD. I strongly urge the committee to pass SB0985.

This bill seeks to codify common-sense guardrails on the operation of detention centers and correctional facilities. Given reports of [human rights abuses](#) and [disease outbreaks](#) at the Fallon Center in Baltimore, where a hundred or more immigrants are crammed into tight spaces with no access to clean water or sanitary facilities, there is a clear need for laws that enforce basic health and safety standards on the operation of these facilities.

The companies that operate these facilities have a lot to gain by cutting corners on health and safety. [CoreCivic](#) and [Geo Group](#) will rake in \$1B in revenue from government contracts this year alone and their leaders consider the expansion of mass deportation in the United States “[one of the most exciting periods](#),” due to the windfalls they stand to receive. Their goal is to create these detention centers as quickly as possible. In the absence of humane and enforceable standards for health and safety, the result is [scarce regard for how the centers treat human beings being detained or incarcerated inside their facilities](#).

The recently purchased warehouse in Williamsport is 15 minutes from my house. I am horrified to imagine the unsanitary, unsafe and inhumane conditions that will undoubtedly arise in this rapidly repurposed warehouse. I have no problem with lawful enforcement of our nation’s immigration laws. The current federal administration incentivizing inhumane and immoral treatment of individuals detained in its immigration enforcement actions brings shame on America. Please do not allow it to bring shame on Maryland.

Maryland has an obligation to implement laws that protect the health and safety of all human beings, including those who are detained or incarcerated. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0985.

Thank you,

Sarah Guroff