

# Maryland Education Coalition

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## SUPPORT: Senate Bill 245

Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC), founded in 1980, advocates for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability statewide for all students in Maryland's public schools, regardless of their academic, economic, geographic, racial, or other demographic status. Our members have extensive, diverse public education experiences and resources and have been found within every level of public education in Maryland from schools, to local and state education departments, commissions, task forces and study groups serving as advocates and advisors on a wide range of issues including the Thornton and Blueprint laws, state education regulations, student and family services, school facilities, operating and capital budget issues. We believe there must be meaningful stakeholder participation in the decision-making process at the local, state, and federal level defined in [federal law](#).

Our coalition includes member organizations that represent all major student groups, including immigrants. Our members believe that education funding and public policy decisions must apply universally accepted equity principles of fairness that are culturally responsive, and reduce achievement, learning, and opportunity gaps among all student groups regardless of their demographic, financial or geographic status. We oppose discrimination against staff, students, parents/guardians, or visitors by age, disability, economic status, educational background, culture, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, language, national origin, parental status, race, religion, sexual orientation, work experience, or other demographic status.

We work to ensure that all students are allowed to come to school in a safe, welcoming learning environment that gives them access to a high-quality education, which will prepare them to become college or career-ready without the exposure and trauma caused by public safety officials within school communities that do not put each student's education and welfare first

Therefore, the Maryland Education offers favorable testimony in support of Senate Bill 245 - **Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**

At its core, SB 245 is about upholding Maryland's values of fairness, dignity, and justice. This legislation recognizes that state and local governments should not be pulled into federal immigration enforcement through agreements such as 287(g). These agreements undermine public trust, divert limited local resources away from community safety, and create fear that keeps families from fully participating in civic life. Maryland should remain focused on due process, equal treatment under the law, and ensuring that all residents feel safe interacting with public institutions.

MEC has seen firsthand how immigration enforcement activity affects the communities we serve. Fear of detention or deportation leads students to miss school, struggle to concentrate in class, and disengage from learning altogether. Parents are less likely to attend school meetings, access services, or communicate with educators when they fear contact with government systems. This climate of fear harms not only immigrant families, but entire school communities, and directly conflicts with the Blueprint's emphasis on student well-being, family engagement, and inclusive learning environments.

Programs such as 287(g) have a well-documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. They erode trust between law enforcement and the communities they are meant to serve, making everyone less safe. When families are afraid to report crimes, seek help, or engage with public institutions, public safety suffers.

These enforcement practices undermine MEC's mission by creating barriers to educational access and stability for all students. Maryland cannot achieve the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future while allowing policies that drive fear into schools and communities and push students out of the learning environment.

For these reasons, the Maryland Education Coalition urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 245.

Please contact Ellie Mitchell or Rick Tyler, Jr. for additional questions at [md.education.coalition@gmail.com](mailto:md.education.coalition@gmail.com)