



Testimony on Senate Bill 791 – Favorable
SB791 – Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement -
Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 25, 2026

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

Doctors for Camp Closure (D4CC) Maryland Chapter offers favorable testimony in support of **SB791 – the Community Trust Act**.

Doctors for Camp Closure is a non-partisan organization of over 2,200 physicians and health care professionals from all specialties who oppose inhumane detention. We advocate for humane and just treatment for all.

The Community Trust Act is about drawing a clear line between Maryland law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement. Right now, local jails and police across nearly every Maryland county voluntarily hold and transfer individuals to ICE without a judicial warrant. Many of these individuals have not been convicted of any crime. This informal collaboration turns local agencies into extensions of ICE's deportation machine, undermines the presumption of innocence, and erodes the community trust that keeps all Marylanders safe.

As health care professionals we know all too well the importance of our patients coming into hospitals and clinics for care, both when they are sick and for preventive care to keep them from getting sick. We do everything in our power to encourage our patients to come in on a regular basis, from having a friendly front desk staff, to having appropriate interpretation services and providing multi-specialty care.

Delaying care due to fear of being picked up by ICE or by local law enforcement and getting transferred to ICE for detention and deportation will mean the difference between life and death for some.

And those individuals who do end up in the custody of ICE are routinely met with medical neglect, isolation, and abuse at the hands of detention officials.

This bill simply requires a judicial warrant before anyone is held for ICE and stops local officers from proactively contacting ICE about people in their custody. It does not prevent the federal government from enforcing immigration laws; it just ensures that Maryland is not doing ICE's job for them.

We've seen instances where patients feared that by seeking care, they could risk detention and deportation due to interactions with law enforcement and get turned over to ICE. And so instead of seeking medical care, they stayed home, but ultimately got sicker or even died from conditions that could have been prevented or treated. And when they were contagious they also put family members at risk as well.

And we have seen first-hand the effect on families and especially children as caregivers go through the process of detention and deportation. The medical, economic, psychological, and emotional cost is severe and long-lasting. In these cases, what would have otherwise been a simple local infraction, resulted in unnecessary long-term suffering.

Also, with passage of the Trust Act, crime victims will no longer fear and face deportation if they report crimes to the police. Communities with acts like the Trust Act find that their crime rates decrease since they know that by reporting crimes to the police they do not risk detention and deportation.

So, passing the Trust Act will make our communities both safer and healthier.

For these reasons, Doctors for Camp Closure urges the committee to issue a favorable report on SB791.

Sincerely,
Kate Sugarman, MD
Doctors for Camp Closure co leader
Potomac MD