



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0245

**Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements –
Prohibition
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

FAVORABLE

January 22, 2026

TO: Chair Senator William C. Smith, Jr, Vice Chair Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, and all members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Lynn R. Mortoro, member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network. (MEPPN)

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

At its core, SB 245 is about upholding Maryland's values - fairness, dignity, and justice for all. This bill affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or diverting state and local resources into federal immigration enforcement. Instead, Maryland should remain focused on community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law by prohibiting immigration enforcement agreements such as 287(g).

As part of the Immigration policy, updated in 2024, the Episcopal Church believes in the need to support refugees and immigrants through advocacy, resettlement, and local ministries, urging the U.S. government to maintain robust refugee programs and enact comprehensive immigration reform. We need to provide community-based and community-supported alternatives to detention; fund non-governmental non-profit organizations to deliver case management support based on individualized needs assessments; Include referrals to community-supported services, especially legal services; treat asylum seekers and migrants with dignity, humanity, and respect, assuring that any restrictions and compliance obligations placed on participants are the least onerous possible.

As Episcopalians, we believe in Jesus' command to us to "Care for our Neighbors as ourselves."

The Diocese of Maryland requests a Favorable report