



Formerly known as CAIR Coalition

1025 Connecticut Avenue NW,
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Testimony on Senate Bill 791 - Favorable

SB 791 – 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,

Amica Center for Immigrant Rights (Amica Center) is pleased to offer **a favorable testimony in strong support of SB 791 - Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions (Community Trust Act).**

The Amica Center. We are a non-profit organization that provides pro bono legal defense services to community members detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Maryland and the DMV area. Our organization has specialized in detained removal defense for the past 25 years and are leaders in creating systemic changes in the immigration system for the benefit of vulnerable non-citizen community members.

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.

Maryland has already made clear that it upholds the value of defending our immigrant communities against ICE by prohibiting 287g agreements. Senate Bill 791 takes the next logical step of putting that value into practice by eliminating informal cooperation between local law enforcement and jails and ICE. When local law enforcement aid immigration



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detention and deportation efforts, it frees up ICE's resources to expand operations into the broader community.

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.

The individuals that we serve, their families and communities, would greatly benefit from this bill. Clear law enforcement boundaries build trust, strengthening communities and institutions. **For these reasons, the Amica Center urges the committee to provide a favorable report on SB 791.**

Sincerely,

Eric Lopez
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