

Testimony on SB0984: Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement **Judicial Proceedings Committee March 10, 2026**

: Favorable

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

My name is **Mary McDougal** and I am a resident of **St Mary's Co.** , MD. I strongly urge the committee to pass SB0984.

I support SB0984 because loopholes in current Maryland law allow municipalities to approve new detention centers without the proper zoning requirements. As a result, municipalities such as Washington County have [sanctioned](#) the use of warehouses constructed to handle commodities to detain human beings, without regard to whether there is [sufficient infrastructure to safely and humanely do so](#).

Given the [human rights abuses documented 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, and reports that DHS's plans to use a Washington County warehouse as a detention camp are [moving forward despite a lack of transparency and community input](#), there is a clear need to develop laws that will require municipalities to conduct greater oversight on immigration detention facilities in our state.

Maryland communities should be considered carefully and according to standards reasons stated in this testimony, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0984.

Thank you, **Mary**