



OUT FOR JUSTICE

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,

My name is Neka Duckett-Randolph, and I am a proud native Chicagoan and current Baltimore City resident. I am the Membership, Advocacy, and Strategic Partnerships Coordinator at Out For Justice, a member-led criminal justice reform organization with the mission to engage, educate, and empower individuals impacted by the legal system to build collective power for dismantling systemic oppression and harmful policies. We strive to humanize marginalized communities, prevent criminalization, reduce recidivism and promote second chances and successful reintegration through advocacy, education and supportive programming. **Out For Justice** offers favorable testimony in support of **SB791 – the Community Trust Act**.

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.

Across the country, we are witnessing rising federal immigration enforcement activity, expanded coordination requests to local jurisdictions, and heightened fear in our communities. When families fear that a traffic stop, a call for help, or a court appearance could lead to detention or deportation, they are less likely to report crimes, cooperate with investigations, or seek protection from violence. That fear does not make any community safer.

Black and immigrant communities share a long history of disproportionate police contact, pretextual stops, and surveillance. Data consistently show racial disparities in traffic stops, searches, arrests, and use of force. When local law enforcement collaborates with federal immigration authorities, those same racialized patterns can funnel individuals into deportation proceedings – often for minor offenses or mere contact with the system.

For justice-impacted Black communities, we know firsthand that overreliance on enforcement does not create safety. For immigrant communities, the stakes are even higher: a single arrest – even without conviction – can trigger detention, family separation, and permanent exile.

The Maryland Trust Act promotes a public safety model rooted in community trust. By limiting unnecessary entanglement between local agencies and federal immigration enforcement, the bill ensures that local law enforcement resources remain focused on genuine public safety priorities rather than civil immigration matters. 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 at Out for Justice stand in solidarity with immigrant justice organizations across Maryland because our communities are bound together by shared experiences with over-policing, racial profiling, and system involvement. The same systems that have disproportionately criminalized Black communities have increasingly entangled immigrant communities through collaboration between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

For these reasons, Out For Justice urges the committee to issue a favorable report on SB791.