

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0791, Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)

Chair William C. Smith, Jr. & Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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My name is Judy Karasik and I reside at 2016 Luzerne Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910. I have lived in Silver Spring since 2001 and, earlier, resided in Chevy Chase from 1958 to 1971. I am a registered voter and American citizen. I am among a group of neighbors who last year formed North Woodside Civil Resistance out of concern for the threat to our democracy posed by the actions of the Trump administration.

I write to express my strong support for SB 0791, Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions (Community Trust Act).

US District Court Judge Joseph R. Goodwin summed up the dangers to our republic presented by the actions of immigration enforcement agents in a decision dated February 19, 2026:

“Antiseptic judicial rhetoric cannot do justice to what is happening. Across the interior of the United States, agents of the federal government— masked, anonymous, armed with military weapons, operating from unmarked vehicles, acting without warrants of any kind — are seizing persons for civil immigration violations and imprisoning them without any semblance of due process. The systematic character of this practice and its deliberate elimination of every structural feature that distinguishes constitutional authority from raw force place it beyond the reach of ordinary legal description. It is an assault on the constitutional order. It is what the Fourth Amendment was written to prevent. It is what the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment forbids.”

The provisions of SB 0791 help Maryland to resist the lawless, violent, and destructive methods of ICE.

The provisions also do much to protect our correctional officers from cooperating with ICE's lawlessness, especially as regards what Judge Goodman describes -- violations of due process, ignorance of the use of judicial warrants -- as well as violations of privacy laws.

Not only does the bill support enforcement of the Constitution, it reinforces public trust in Maryland state and local law enforcement and public safety professionals, more needed now than ever. Communities need to be able to work with those professionals to make our state a safer, more just place for all residents.

SB0791 is an important complement to the ban on formal 287(g) agreements. We all know that cooperation with these uncountable federal agents can happen in many informal ways that pose a great danger to law-abiding Maryland residents. SB0791 would shut down this loophole.

Marylanders are taking a stand every day in the streets, parks, and highway overpasses all over the state, even as the Trump administration makes clear that peaceful protesters are also their targets. We welcome this body's steps to match that same courage.

Unaccountable law enforcement is the essence of a police state. By ruling out cooperation with the out-of-control agency destabilizing our communities, SB0791 marks an important step towards reclaiming our basic rights. Thank you for your consideration.

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