

Testimony on SB854 – Favorable
Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions
Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee
February 24, 2026

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

My name is Marcia Greenberg and I am a resident of Lexington Park in St Mary's County. I am writing in support of SB0854 – Public Safety, Law Enforcement Officers, Restrictions

Honorable Senators, I write this testimony with deep concern for what is happening in our country – and the astonishing lack of respect for the rule of law. Back in the 1980s, I earned my JD degree from Northwestern School of Law, where I studied constitutional law – and I learned about the roles of the federal and state governments. I understand the concept of “supremacy” – but I also understand the concept of states’ rights. I know that the Federal government was an essential legal force for desegregation in the South in the 50s and 60s – but that our State government is now an essential legal force for combatting racism in some states and counties today.

I have watched as this country has learned from our errors, and sought to address the persistence of racism. I was sobered, saddened and horrified as we saw law officers murder George Floyd – and too many others. I worked with friends and community to understand the need for anti-racism education and policies. I do believe that we, as a nation, need to work tirelessly to root out white supremacy, and to ensure that each and every human being who is living and working in, or even visiting, our country, is treated with dignity and respect.

I have therefore been horrified by the racism that comes out of the White House and from our Department of Homeland Services. I was shocked that the US Supreme Court gave the green light to ICE and CBP officers detaining people based solely on their apparent race. This is wrong. It must not be allowed.

Furthermore, having worked in Eastern Europe and West Africa on efforts to empower women in nations and communities that fail to respect their rights, I have also seen supposed “law enforcement” attack and repress innocent individuals with impunity. I know quite a bit about repressive regimes, authoritarian tactics, and governments that persecute their own people. But I never, ever – in my wildest nightmares – imagined that our country, the United States of America, would slide into terrorizing our own communities in ways reminiscent of Russia and East Germany, of Pinochet in Chile and the military in Argentina, of Duterte in the Philippines and the military in Myanmar. Nor that we would accept behavior by federal agents that would leave civilians more endangered than before.

Such “official” treatment of citizens and innocent residents by government-led thugs, should not happen in the United States of America. It violates all that we hold true – both legally and morally. What we see now – with ICE agents terrorizing our communities, dragging people out of their cars and their homes, and murdering peaceful protesters – must be stopped in every way possible. They are ruthless and cruel; they ignore our laws and due process.

As long as the Republicans control the House, Senate and White House, we cannot stop this ICE horror at the federal level. Even if we had counties that were willing to protect our neighbors, many do not have the mechanisms to stop it – and some “red counties” have openly expressed their intention to ignore the new ban on 287(g) in order to collaborate with ICE. They seek loopholes and opportunities to prey on innocent people who just happen to be brown or black-skinned. We cannot allow them the leeway, the opportunity, or the impunity to engage in any sort of racial profiling.

It is **imperative**, therefore, that you pass Senate Bill 854 to ensure that racial profiling by federal agents is not allowed in the State of Maryland – and to protect those in our State who would report such policies or behavior by law enforcement. And it is essential that there be mechanisms in our State laws by which individuals or organizations can sue and gain legal redress for racial profiling and predatory racist conduct.

Unable to protect ourselves at the federal and county levels, we turn to you to ensure that protections are passed, and will be enforced at the state level. We urge you to do the right thing for all Marylanders.

Please find in favor of SB0854 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions. Please report it out to your colleagues in the Senate with a firm, positive vote.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Marcia Greenberg
St Mary's County