

## FAVORABLE Testimony

### Senate Bill 245

#### Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Chairperson and esteemed members of the Committee,

In my capacity as a resident of Maryland and foster parent to unaccompanied minors, I strongly urge you to **Support** Senate Bill 245.

**Cooperation agreements like 287(g) agreements undermine public safety.** When law enforcement officers act in concert with an immigration enforcement agency whose primary concern is detaining as many people as possible, *not* promoting public safety, the result is that residents who have accents or are racial minorities cannot safely seek the aid of local law enforcement without facing a risk of being detained themselves.

And bad actors know this. When I served as a clerk in a Circuit Court in Maryland, I observed cases where immigrants were targeted for rape and armed robberies, at least partially because they were more vulnerable. Fortunately, the victims in these cases could go to the Baltimore City Police without fear of being racially profiled, and with their cooperation, the individuals responsible were detained. **This would not have happened under a 287(g) agreement.** I know this to be true because, when a friend was recently assaulted and I was the first person available to assist her, the first thought that crossed my mind was “is it safe to call the police?” It was, so we did, and her attacker was promptly located. **However, if we were in a 287(g) county,** and my friend was a racial minority, *regardless of her legal status, I would not have called for help.*

**Additionally, as a temporary caregiver of a Latina child, I cannot emphasize how critical it was to her wellbeing that we lived in a county without a 287(g) agreement.** When we saw police activity, I could confidently re-assure her that the officers were working to keep us safe, and that the person being arrested was not being arrested just because of their race or legal status. I was able to reduce her fear and anxiety by informing her that, at least in Baltimore City, the police were not the same as ICE.

It is the role and duty of state and local police to serve and protect the residents of their jurisdictions. To do this effectively, they must build trust with all of us, including those of us who are the most marginalized. All residents of Maryland should be able to seek the aid and protection of an officer in the state without fearing that they will be racially profiled and asked about their immigration status, because this is *not* the role of local police. And **our police should not be detaining individuals who pose no safety threat to our communities.**

I call on all Maryland lawmakers to **strongly support** this legislation that prioritizes the safety and wellbeing of our Maryland communities.

Signed,  
Megan Good