

**Testimony on SB0985: Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Minimum Mandatory Standards**

**Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**March 10, 2026**

**Position: Favorable**

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

My name is Emily C. Blank. I am a resident of Brentwood, MD and a retired economist. I strongly urge the committee to pass SB0985.

This bill seeks to codify common-sense guardrails on the operation of detention centers and correctional facilities. Given reports of [human rights abuses](#) and [disease outbreaks](#) 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, there is a clear need for laws that enforce basic health and safety standards on the operation of these facilities.

The companies that operate these facilities have a lot to gain by cutting corners on health and safety. [CoreCivic](#) and [Geo Group](#) will rake in \$1B in revenue from government contracts this year alone and their leaders consider the expansion of mass deportation in the United States “[one of the most exciting periods](#),” due to the windfalls they stand to receive. Their goal is to create these detention centers as quickly as possible. In the absence of humane and enforceable standards for health and safety, the result is [scarce regard for how the centers treat human beings being detained or incarcerated inside their facilities](#).

No one deserves the treatment inflicted on immigrants in such camps. Further, such treatment discourages immigration. Immigrant students and scientists are often the best and the brightest from their countries; most immigrants make positive contributions to the labor force, particularly in such occupations as health and personal care services.

Maryland has an obligation to implement laws that protect the health and safety of all human beings, including those who are detained or incarcerated. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0985.

Thank you,

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