
[Draft] In Favor of SB0245

From

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

My name is Stevan Fisher, a resident of the City of Frederick, and I am writing in support of SB0245 regarding – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition. As an American citizen born abroad to native-born US citizens, I feel especially sensitive to racial and ethnic profiling. Immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) create fear among immigrants and undermine public safety for our Maryland communities without any increase in effectiveness; people detained for criminal activity are already checked and reported to the relevant Federal authorities. I support SB0245 because when law-abiding people fear contact with law enforcement, even when they are the victims of crime, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate as witnesses.

The instances of US citizens and lawful green-card holders (and, as has happened in Minnesota, Native Americans) being caught up, imprisoned, and their rights abused during the current Federal sweeps are increasing, and I would hate to think that LEOs in the Old Line State would aid and abet the ongoing deportation of peaceful community members to achieve the dubious goals of a de facto ethnic cleansing.

Programs like 287(g) have been associated with racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. They divert local resources away from protecting communities and instead burden local agencies with federal deportation efforts that separate families and destabilize neighborhoods. Prohibition of these agreements would improve trust in community policing not just within a vulnerable population, but among the general population as well.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB0245. It is the American thing to do.

Thank you for your time,

Stevan Fisher
Frederick, Maryland