



The Garrett County Branch of NAACP strongly supports SB0245 with a full ban on 287g agreements statewide.

On behalf of the Garrett County Branch of the NAACP we submit this testimony in favor of **SB0245 - Public Safety-Immigration Enforcement Agreements-Prohibition.**

The NAACP has long stood at the forefront of the fight for civil rights, racial justice, and equal protection under the law. As the oldest and boldest civil rights organization in the nation, we remain committed to ensuring the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all individuals, while working tirelessly to eliminate race-based discrimination. The Garrett County NAACP believes that an injustice to one is an injustice to all. The 287(g) program violates this principle by enabling racial profiling, discrimination, and fear within immigrant communities, eroding trust between law enforcement and the people they are sworn to protect.

The Garrett County NAACP was the last and most recent branch of the NAACP to be formed in Maryland with a mission to foster a welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant community. Our rural county can be a difficult place for newcomers. Garrett County needs professionals of all backgrounds and colors to support our local medical and specialty needs, but unfortunately people of color have not always felt safe or welcome. We fear that local law enforcement collaborating with ICE could exacerbate these concerns.

The 287g program, which Sheriff Bryson Meyers adopted in 2024, violates constitutional right for due process and decreases our local autonomy. While we appreciate the listening sessions with Sheriff Meyers where he explained his thoughtful consideration of adopting the 287g program as well as his assurances to refrain from engaging in racial profiling, he is an elected official. This leaves the county subject to subjective interpretations of a future county sheriff who may have a more aggressive stance. Though there apparently have not been any immigrant referrals to this point, we are aware that there are residents in the community who feel very unsafe and fearful.

There is no need for this program as most violent crimes in the county are committed by local, white residents. In the very unlikely case that an undocumented immigrant is detained for a violent crime, there are procedures in place to transfer the individual to the correct detention facility. 287g agreements bolster white supremacist confidence that crimes against people of color will likely go unreported. In fact, it's been shown that crime rates are higher with 287gs.

We also support our brothers and sisters in fellow Western Maryland counties where these 287g agreements have led to racial profiling and the unconstitutional imprisonment of Brown and Black individuals with no criminal offenses, impacting families and hard-working members of communities.

It is for these reasons that we ask you to vote in support of SB SB0245.

GCNAACP Branch Leadership