

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable
SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

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

My name is Lorena M. Diaz and I am a resident in D40 of Baltimore City, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition.

Ending 287(g) programs is deeply important to me because I have seen firsthand the devastating impact they have had on my family and loved ones. What is happening in Maryland with ICE and 287(g) agreements has forced many of my family members and friends into hiding and has fundamentally altered how they live their daily lives. They are afraid to do even the most basic things, like picking their children up from school, because of the constant fear of being detained, kidnapped, and deported. Programs like 287(g) only deepen this harm by entangling local law enforcement with federal immigration enforcement.

Everyday tasks that most people take for granted have become high-risk for my family. Out of fear of possible interactions with ICE or local police, my nephew, who is 11 years old, and my niece, who is 14, have been forced to take on adult responsibilities. They now help with errands like grocery shopping alongside documented family members so that their parents and grandparents are not put at risk. Being intentional about only speaking English in public so they do not draw additional attention on themselves. No child should have to shoulder this kind of fear or responsibility simply because of their family's immigration status. Or for any reason at all.

I support SB 245 because immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) create fear in immigrant communities and undermine public safety for everyone. When people fear contact with law enforcement, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate as witnesses—even when they are victims.

For the past several months, we have witnessed the terror that ICE has brought onto our communities, creating a chilling effect across Maryland. Families have been torn apart. Communities have been destabilized. We have seen countless videos of our neighbors and loved ones being detained in public spaces. Outside their homes, at their workplaces, and in front of their children. This level of fear makes people afraid to go to work, take their kids to school, or seek medical care among many other things.

Programs like 287(g) have been associated with racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. They divert local resources away from protecting communities and instead entangle local agencies in federal deportation efforts that separate families and destabilize neighborhoods.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 245.

Thank you for your time and consideration.