

Date of Hearing: February 24, 2026

Jo Shifrin

Bethesda, Maryland 20817

TESTIMONY ON SB 854 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions (Ban on Racial Profiling)

TO: Chair Smith Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Jo Shifrin

My name is Jo Shifrin. I am a resident of District 16. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 854, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions (Ban Racial Profiling).

I am a retiree and moved to Bethesda in 2014. I'm a member of Adat Shalom, a Reconstructionist synagogue in Bethesda. My support for this legislation comes from my Jewish values. Among these values are *Tikkun Olam*, an obligation to make the world a more fair and equitable place and *Dei Machsoro*, a place where all people can live and thrive.

For the past year, federal agents have acted lawlessly. We have seen them make baseless arrests, abuse their authority and use excessive force. Although the Administration vowed to arrest only "the worst of the worst," we have seen ICE agents beat law-abiding residents and kill US citizens. ICE agents have swept up, brutalized, and detained anyone who they perceived to be Latino. Racial profiling occurs when police target someone based on that person's perceived or actual race, ethnicity, nationality, or religion, rather than evidence of criminal activity. This erodes trust between residents and law enforcement agencies, makes our communities less safe, undermines community policing efforts, and is likely unconstitutional (violating the Fourth Amendment).

This bill seeks to ensure that we maintain existing constitutional protections and limits federal abuses. It codifies constitutional protections against racial profiling by law enforcement officers, and it makes clear that federal agents are subject to the same Maryland standards as state and local law enforcement. It does not prevent the Federal government from enforcing immigration and other federal laws. And it does not include using race, ethnicity, or national origin, in combination with other identifying factors, when law enforcement seeks to apprehend a specific suspect wanted in connection with a specific offense. .

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 854, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Restrictions (Ban Racial Profiling).