

Date of Hearing: January 22, 2026

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TESTIMONY ON SB#245 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

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

FROM: Lisa Anne Barkan

My name is Lisa Anne Barkan. I am a resident of District 42B. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#245, Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition.

The Trump administration is engaged in a nationwide campaign to terrorize and demonize immigrants. Immigrants have been disappeared, detained, and deported. Some immigrants have been sent back to countries where they will be killed.

Immigration Customs and Enforcement Agents (“ICE Agents”) are integral to this campaign. I watch in horror as masked ICE Agents, who do not carry identification: pull immigrants out of their cars, forcibly enter their homes, and remove them from their families. Every day in Maryland, ICE Agents separate at least ten immigrant families.

I became an attorney because of my profound belief in the rule of law. I have loved my country—even with its many flaws.—because of its ideals: to pursue justice, to encourage dissent, and to welcome all. My grandparents fled to the United States to escape pogroms. The U.S. provided them safety and security. My sacred texts teach me to treat everyone the same and to welcome, protect, care for and love those from other lands. I am commanded “not to wrong them.” Leviticus 19:33-34.

ICE has entered into voluntary agreements with localities that deputize local law enforcement agents to act as ICE Agents. Eight Maryland counties have entered such agreements. SB245 would prohibit the state, local jurisdictions, and officials, from entering these types of agreements.

Maryland should not participate in and further this administration's cruel treatment of immigrants. Immigrants should live without fear of being abducted and having their families torn apart. Our country is based on laws—not the dictates of any person.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#245.