

Worcester County Sheriff's Office

Matthew Crisafulli
Sheriff



Nathaniel Passwaters
Chief Deputy

Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I respectfully **oppose Senate Bill 660 (SB 660)**, titled *Public Safety Law Enforcement, Response to Immigration Enforcement Actions*.

SB 660 would require that when a law enforcement agency receives a report of an immigration enforcement action occurring within the agency's jurisdiction, the responding deputy must observe and document specific details regarding that event, and that such records would become subject to the Maryland Public Information Act.

While the bill may be well-intended in seeking transparency, *it conflates routine public safety duties with immigration enforcement in ways that jeopardize core law enforcement functions, operational flexibility, and community trust, especially among impacted populations.*

Law enforcement agencies are not and should not be deputized as immigration enforcement authorities. Immigration actions, including arrests or detentions pursuant to federal immigration law, are federal responsibilities handled by *United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)* or other federal bodies. Imposing a statutory mandate to respond, document, and report on these events expands local duties beyond core public safety roles.

This conflation risks diverting deputies from their primary roles of investigating crimes, preserving evidence, responding to emergencies, and protecting victims and witnesses.

Placing immigration enforcement reports under the *Public Information Act* raises serious concerns about sensitive information being publicly accessible, including the identities of crime victims or witnesses who may be unwilling to come forward if they fear public exposure of their immigration status or interaction with law enforcement.

Transparent policing is important, but so is protecting individuals' confidentiality and ensuring victims feel safe reporting crimes without fear of immigration consequences.

Communities, particularly immigrant communities, already express hesitation in reporting crimes due to fear of immigration consequences. Mandating law enforcement to actively document and publicize encounters related to immigration enforcement actions may further erode trust and discourage cooperation with law enforcement in legitimate criminal matters, undermining public safety.

Effective policing depends on strong community partnerships, and any statutory requirement that blurs the lines between local law enforcement and federal immigration machinery risks damaging those partnerships.

For the reasons outlined above, including operational inefficiency, privacy and public records concerns, adverse effects on community trust, and redundancy with existing systems, I respectfully urge this Committee to **issue an unfavorable report on SB 660**.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

“Proud to Protect, Ready to Serve”

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