

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathryn Parke and I am a lifelong Marylander and a resident of Baltimore City. I am writing to urge you to vote for SB 0791, Community Trust Act, without amendments.

Maryland currently enables President Trump's cruel and lawless mass deportation agenda by allowing localities to voluntarily funnel immigrants into ICE custody. Entirely separate from formal 287(g) agreements, in 23 of 24 counties, local law enforcement and jails still notify or hold and transfer individuals to ICE. The Attorney General and extensive case law have found that honoring ICE administrative requests to detain individuals without a judicial warrant is illegal and could lead to civil lawsuits. Continued voluntary collusion with this ICE's paramilitary forces is a political choice that wastes Maryland taxpayer dollars and makes our communities less safe.

This informal and illegal collaboration has funneled 4 times more Marylanders – most of whom had no criminal conviction into the deportation pipeline—than under 287(g) agreements. Shockingly, 23 of 24 Maryland counties informally assist ICE in this way. Furthermore, Maryland sheriffs who currently have 287 (g) agreements have boasted that they will continue to cooperate with ICE on an informal basis, openly flouting the intent of the General Assembly. Continued voluntary collusion with this ICE's paramilitary forces is a political choice that wastes Maryland taxpayer dollars and makes our communities less safe. The Community Trust Act would affirmatively ban this practice, ceasing Maryland's complicity in the Trump administration's inhumane mass deportation agenda.

As a Maryland resident and your constituent, I do not want Maryland's public safety resources used to support the Trump administration's quota-driven deportation dragnet. I call on you to close all existing loopholes that allow Maryland's law enforcement and correctional facilities to aid and abet ICE's lawlessness.

As we have seen with 287(g), local jails have quietly become essential to Trump's mass arrest and deportation campaign. I am pleased to see the legislature is on track to ban formal collaboration with ICE with the passage of HB 444/SB 245. The Community Trust Act is a critical next step to 1) affirm that correctional facilities must have a judicial warrant to detain, or prolong a person's detention, in order to transfer them to ICE; and 2) stop police and correctional officers from facilitating immigration arrests by reaching out to ICE directly with information about people who encounter law enforcement. Nothing in the legislation prevents the Federal government from enforcing immigration laws or hides any information from ICE, now the most highly funded law enforcement agency in the world.

Maryland must learn from states like New Jersey, which banned 287(g) but continued to permit informal collaboration with ICE. After leaving this loophole open, New Jersey saw a spike in arrests from local jails as well as in the streets. Ceasing collaboration with ICE in all forms reduces DHS ability to conduct their campaign of terror in our communities. Please protect as many of our immigrant neighbors as possible, and defend the rule of law, by voting a clean Community Trust Act out of committee.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Parke, 2117 Lake Montebello Terrace, Baltimore MD 2128

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