

Date of Hearing: March 12, 2026

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TESTIMONY ON SB#985 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

**Correctional Services–Private Immigration Detention Facilities–Minimum
Mandatory Standards**

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#985 Correctional Services–Private Immigration Detention Facilities—Minimum Mandatory Standards

The Trump Administration is engaged in a nationwide campaign to terrorize and demonize immigrants. Masked ICE Agents, who do not carry identification illegally pull immigrants out of their cars, forcibly enter their homes, and remove them from their families. Again, without any cause or due process of law, immigrants are then sent to Immigration Detention Centers where they are warehoused and subject to appalling conditions—lack of adequate sanitation, food, and medical care. Recently, a man who was being detained in an Immigration Detention Center in Arizona died because he had a toothache and was not provided with dental care. This is not an isolated incident.

On March 9, 2026 the Democratic members of Maryland’s congressional delegation, as well as state and local lawmakers (the Delegation) , made an unannounced visit to a US Customs and Enforcement Facility in Baltimore.--where immigrants are detained. The Delegation found deplorable conditions including, “insufficient beds and a single sink and toilet [for] dozens of people.” Representative Ivy, a former prosecutor who said “he’s seen the inside of plenty of jails,” remarked that he “never has seen anything like that.” The Baltimore Banner, “No detainees at Baltimore ICE facility during congressional visit,”

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.

No one should be forced to live in inhumane conditions. SB#985 would prevent this. It would by requiring Immigration Detention Facilities to comply with certain minimum standards to ensure the well being of those who are detained.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#985.