

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathleen Clair and I am a resident of Columbia, Maryland. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity only. I am writing in support of **SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

I grew up in Columbia, Maryland and now am raising my two children here. I also lived in Montgomery County, Maryland for 14 years. I care deeply about the safety of my community. I also care deeply about living in a free society and, like so many Marylanders, am seriously concerned with the increased presence of federal immigration agents in communities across our state and throughout the country, and with the tactics they employ.

Immigrants and their family members are our neighbors, our friends, our children's classmates and confidants. The same people who have graciously opened their homes and hearts to my family are now in danger. The spaces in which my children have shared laughter and celebrated birthdays are now among the targets for roving gangs of armed federal agents who shove, shoot, and grab first, and ask questions later.

As has been well documented, the federal government is currently engaging in overly broad and abusive sweeps, brazenly violating the law and common decency. But as an attorney who in my prior job did just a small amount of immigration related pro bono work, I know for a fact that abusive tactics in immigration raids are nothing new.

Maryland cannot control the federal government's direction for immigration enforcement, but it does not need to go out of its way to help. Furthermore, immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) create fear in immigrant communities and undermine public safety for everyone. When people fear contact with law enforcement, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate as witnesses—even when they are victims. These agreements also divert local resources away from protecting communities. If we care about real crime and public safety, we will keep federal immigration law (often civil law) enforcement functions separate from local and state criminal investigations and enforcement.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **SB 245**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Clair