

January 20, 2026

Vicki Gottlich
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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB# 0245 - PUBLIC SAFETY-IMMIGRATION
ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENTS-PROHIBITION**

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

FROM: Vicki Gottlich

My name is Vicki Gottlich, and I live in District 17. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0245, Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition.

Allowing local Maryland law enforcement agencies to enter into 287(g) agreements with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency goes against my religious beliefs and practices. Leviticus 19:33-34 teaches us to treat the stranger among us as citizens; to not wrong them, and to love them as ourselves. This bill, which prohibits 287(g) agreements, takes a moral approach to protect non-citizens, particularly brown and black people, and reflects my religious teachings.

I am an attorney who worked in legal services and then the federal government on behalf of low-income individuals. I have seen first hand how unchecked law enforcement activities, especially those targeting brown and black communities, affect the ability of members of those communities to work and live safely in Maryland. My older clients and clients with disabilities who are citizens are impacted when their home health aids and caregivers who aren't citizens are too fearful to come to work and support them. My daughter, a Montgomery County Public School teacher, has had children miss school and has found family members unwilling to participate in family meetings and other school activities out of fear for their safety. Friends and neighbors have taken to carrying their passports with them in case they are targeted.

When local Maryland law enforcement agencies agree to take on the work of ICE they are not making Maryland safer for anyone. Instead, they are not protecting either citizens or strangers or loving them as themselves. They are committing wrongs against them based on racial profiling and other misconceptions. As a result, people are missing work, children are missing school, people who rely on the help and work provided by targeted populations are not being served. A favorable vote on SB#0245 protects all Marylanders and reflects religious teaching.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0245.