



TESTIMONY FOR SB0988 Judicial Facilities – Stops, Detentions, and Arrests

Bill Sponsor: Senator Hettleman

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0988 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members are grateful that Delegate Stewart introduced this bill. We have all heard the Federal Government talk about removing violent criminals from our streets, while the reality of what we see is that they want to deport law-abiding immigrants, and even US Citizens, if their skin is brown. ICE Agents have been hanging around courts and other administrative buildings where immigrants, who entered this country legally and are following all the rules to check in regarding their immigration cases have to go. For immigrants, if they don't go to the check-ins, then they are violating the immigration rules and can be deported, but ICE Agents deport them anyway.

This must stop. If we have rules for immigrants to check in at courthouses and other administrative buildings, we have to make them secure from ICE Agents. This bill, if enacted, would prohibit detaining, or arresting an individual for an alleged or adjudicated offense that is subject only to a civil penalty while the individual is in a judicial facility or is traveling within 1 mile of a judicial facility for the purpose of attending a meeting, a hearing, or another official proceeding in that judicial facility. It also makes any evidence collected at the detention or arrest inadmissible in court and allow the person detained or arrested, or the Attorney General to file a civil claim against the person who detained or arrested them.

This is an important safeguard, which will allow immigrants to follow the process towards becoming citizens.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.