

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 **Claudia Galindo**, and I am a **resident of Baltimore County, Maryland**. I am writing in support of **SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

I write as a Latina scholar of education policy and a resident of Baltimore County since 2005. During my time in the County, I have observed the significant social, cultural, and economic vitality that the Latino immigrant community contributes to Maryland. Latino immigrants have a positive influence in Maryland in several interrelated and well-documented ways that span economic, social, cultural, and civic domains. Latino-owned businesses contribute to local economic growth, job creation, and neighborhood revitalization, particularly in urban (Baltimore City) and suburban (Baltimore County) areas that have experienced population decline or labor shortages. As Maryland, like much of the United States, faces an aging population, Latino communities help sustain population growth and workforce participation. Younger Latino populations contribute to school enrollment stability, future labor force development, and long-term economic resilience across the state. Latino families and students contribute to the educational landscape by enriching schools with linguistic diversity, transnational knowledge, and strong family networks. Latinos in Maryland contribute through community organizing, faith-based initiatives, parent advocacy, and local leadership. Their engagement strengthens civil society and supports responsive local institutions, particularly in education, health, and community development. Taken together, these contributions demonstrate that Latinos are not only an integral part of Maryland's present, but also central to its social and economic future.

I support **SB 245** because 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.

As a longtime resident of Baltimore County and a scholar who works closely with Latino families, educators, and community organizations, I have observed how immigration enforcement practices—both direct and indirect—have contributed to a persistent climate of fear within immigrant communities. Even in the absence of active enforcement actions, the perception of surveillance and the lack of clear institutional boundaries between local services and federal immigration authorities have led many families to limit their engagement with schools, health providers, and public agencies.

In Baltimore County, I have seen parents hesitate to attend school meetings, enroll children in programs, or access language and disability services out of concern that personal information could place their families at risk. Community members frequently report avoiding contact with law enforcement, even when they are victims or witnesses of crime, which undermines public safety for the broader community. These responses are not driven by unwillingness to comply with the law, but by uncertainty, inconsistent messaging, and prior experiences of harm or exclusion.

Programs like 287(g) have been associated with racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. They divert local resources away from protecting communities and instead entangle local agencies in federal deportation efforts that separate families and destabilize neighborhoods. These programs create barriers to safety, health, and educational stability—not only for immigrant families, but for the County as a whole. Instead, we need programs that prioritize transparency, trust-building, and clear separation between community services and immigration enforcement.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **SB 245**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Claudia Galindo