



January 20, 2026

The Honorable William Smith
Chairman
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Smith and other distinguished members of the Committee,

My name is Shari Rendall and I am the Director of State and Local Engagement at the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). FAIR is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of concerned individuals who believe that our immigration laws must be reformed to serve our nation's interests.

FAIR advocates for immigration policies that reduce the harmful impact of illegal immigration on national security, public safety, the economy, jobs, education, healthcare and the environment. Founded in 1979, FAIR has more than three million members and supporters nationwide, including approximately 12,300 in Maryland. On behalf of our members and supporters, I am writing to express FAIR's opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 245.

The bill eliminates the 287(g) program for law enforcement officers seeking to remove criminal aliens from their communities. This legislation conflicts with federal law. 8 U.S.C. §1357 (g) states that law enforcement officers may enter into memoranda of understanding with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), but also that a formal agreement with the federal government is not necessary for any officer or employee of a state or local agency to communicate with the Attorney General regarding the immigration status of any individual. This includes reporting knowledge that a particular alien is not lawfully present in the United States or to cooperate with the Attorney General in the identification, apprehension, detention, or removal of aliens not lawfully present in the United States.

There are four types of 287(g) agreements: the task force model, the jail enforcement model, the warrant services officer program and the tribal task force model. Only the task force and tribal models operate outside of the jail. Currently, there are eight counties that have 287(g) agreements and all the Maryland programs apply once an individual is already in custody. Three of the programs are the jail enforcement model: Cecil, Frederick, and Harford. The remainder of the programs are under the warrant services officer program: Allegany, Carroll, Garrett, St. Mary's and Washington. To be perfectly clear, Maryland law enforcement officers are not rounding up individuals in their communities for ICE. Rather, law enforcement officers in the jails are delegated specified immigration officer's functions.

The bottom line is that these 287(g) programs protect public safety. In its 2022 End-of-Year report (the most recent one available), the Department of Homeland Security highlighted the effectiveness of the state and federal partnerships. State and local law enforcement 287(g) officers encountered 8,842 aliens from 141 countries. Of those encountered, 1,895 were convicted criminals and 4,999 had pending criminal charges. Among the charges and convictions were 1,594 for assault, 1,189 for dangerous drugs, 74 for homicides, and 430 for larceny. Only 160 had criminal charges or convictions for immigration.

Some have claimed that SB 245 is needed because "ICE is abducting people, killing people right off the streets." The ironic thing is that the 287(g) will likely ensure that ICE officers are not in the communities. With the 287(g) program specific individuals are transferred directly to ICE custody from the jails. This enhances public safety by ensuring that criminal aliens are not released back into the community. Additionally, it ensures that individuals other than the ones sought by ICE are not detained. If ICE must go into a community to find an individual it is seeking to remove, it is not going to ignore other individuals in the household who may also be removable.

Finally, policies like SB 245 deny ICE critical assistance to enable it to accomplish its statutorily mandated mission to identify and ultimately remove illegal aliens who are currently in state or local custody. ICE has roughly 20,000 employees, but less than half are dedicated to the apprehension and removal of illegal aliens. The cooperation of state and local law enforcement, which number about 900,000 strong, is vital to ferreting out those among us who are here illegally and who wish to cause us harm.

To ensure the safety of our communities, state and local law enforcement and governments should be encouraged to, not discouraged from, cooperating with federal

immigration authorities. For these reasons, FAIR opposes SB 245 and urges an unfavorable vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my input. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I may be of assistance. I may be reached by email at srendall@fairus.org or by phone at 202- 328-7004.

Sincerely,

Shari Rendall

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