

**Testimony in Support of HB1018
Correctional Facilities and Immigration Detention Facilities – Minimum Mandatory
Standards**

March 30, 2026

Dear Judicial Proceedings Chair Senator Will Smith, Harford County Committee member Senator Mary-Dulany James, and all Judicial Proceedings Committee members:

I write in strong support of House Bill 1018. This urgently needed bill ensures that anyone held in detention in Maryland – including civil immigration detainees – is held under basic, enforceable standards of care and safety.

HB1018 establishes mandatory care and condition standards required at all correctional facilities and detention centers. These standards ensure that security, safety, food services, and housing and sanitation are adequate to protect the health and well-being of the people being detained. The bill establishes a public reporting mechanism for violations and requires the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards to include a detailed analysis of compliance issues in its annual report. The Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards is empowered to close facilities where life-threatening or health-endangering conditions are found.

This bill does not regulate federal enforcement decisions – it simply sets minimum safety, inspection, and readiness standards for all jails in the state, whether public, private, federal, state, or county. A federal appeals court has already upheld a similar Washington State law, affirming that states may enforce uniform health and safety standards across all detention facilities. Maryland has both the authority and the obligation to act.

Every person held in detention in our state deserves basic human dignity. HB1018 provides a measured, legally grounded framework to ensure that goal is met and that accountability mechanisms are in place when it is not. I urge a favorable report from committee and swift passage by the full Senate.

Respectfully,

Dawn Sacks
1603 Forest Valley Ct.
Forest Hill, MD 21050
sacksdawn@comcast.net