



**Testimony on Senate Bill 791 – Favorable
SB791 – Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement -
Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)**

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 25, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Silver Spring Justice Coalition offers favorable testimony in support of **SB791 – the Community Trust Act**.

Silver Spring Justice Coalition is an organization of community members, faith groups, and civil and human rights organizations from throughout Montgomery County that works to reduce the presence of police in our communities; eliminate violence and harm by police; establish transparency and accountability; and redirect public funds toward community needs.

The Community Trust Act is about drawing a clear line between Maryland law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement. Right now, local jails and police across nearly every Maryland county voluntarily hold and transfer individuals to ICE without a judicial warrant. Many of these individuals have not been convicted of any crime. This informal collaboration turns local agencies into extensions of ICE's deportation machine, undermines the presumption of innocence, and erodes the community trust that keeps all Marylanders safe.

Our immigrant community is under siege by federal government actions. Places in Montgomery County that used to bustle are empty and quiet because immigrants (and some who might be perceived as immigrants) are afraid to venture out for fear of a chance encounter with federal officials or local law enforcement. Immigrants are having food delivered by local mutual aid groups, getting others to take their children to school (or keeping them home), setting up Standby Guardianship for their children in case the parents are detained or deported, and even afraid to answer their phones or open their door to anyone they do not know.

Separation of police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) functions is imperative to create communities in which residents can seek urgent help without risk of being turned over to ICE, and where all members of the community are treated equally in the criminal justice system regardless of immigration status. Meanwhile, due to such collaboration, immigrants who commit crimes often suffer an unnecessary and unjust double punishment; even before they have been convicted or after they serve their sentences, police and jails in Maryland still transfer them to

ICE for detention and deportation. Every Maryland resident deserves the chance to live safely in their community, and ICE-police collaboration often takes that chance away.

Allowing law enforcement to coordinate with ICE more than required by law, simply increases the terror of law enforcement encounters and distrust of engaging with law enforcement. Such distrust leads immigrants to not report crimes or serve as witnesses, which makes all of us less safe.

This bill simply requires a judicial warrant before anyone is held for ICE and stops local officers from proactively contacting ICE about people in their custody. It does not prevent the federal government from enforcing immigration laws; it just ensures that Maryland is not doing ICE's job for them.

Our members have seen first-hand the effect on families and especially children as caregivers go through the process of detention and deportation. The economic, psychological, and emotional cost is severe and long-lasting. In these cases, what would have otherwise been a simple infraction, resulted in unnecessary long-term suffering.

It is vital that the State promote the safety of all and minimize the risks immigrants face by prohibiting law enforcement from acting on behalf of ICE unless there is a judicial warrant.

For these reasons, Silver Spring Justice Coalition urges the committee to issue a favorable report on SB791.

Sincerely,
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