

Date of Hearing: 2/25/2026
Jonathan Levitas
Baltimore, MD 21230

TESTIMONY ON SB#0791 - FAVORABLE

Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Jonathan Levitas

My name is Jonathan Levitas. I am a resident of District 46, and am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0791 (The Community Trust Act)

As I wrote in my last testimony, I am a resident of Riverside, in Baltimore, Maryland, and a member of Beth Am Congregation, the Riverside Neighborhood Association, and, lately, several mutual aid organizations. I continue to write on my own behalf, and on behalf of my family.

Thank you for passing the ban on 287(g) agreements. These agreements had become a stain on the conscience of our state, and I am grateful to see them gone. I write now in support of the Community Trust Act, which will ban unofficial cooperation between Maryland's law enforcement agencies and Federal immigration enforcement agencies.

The Community Trust Act is a vital piece of the legislative push to prohibit cooperation between state and local law enforcement agencies and Federal immigration enforcement in this dangerous time. Soon after the 287(g) ban passed, several county Sheriffs stated they would continue to cooperate with ICE in other ways. Harford County's Sheriff indicates he will continue to inform ICE of who is in his jail and to allow the agency to file detainers, while Carroll County's states he has drafted policy to allow communication with the Federal agency.

Most counties in Maryland already engage in informal collaboration with ICE. In 2025, these informal collaborations, rather than a 287(g) program, accounted for approximately 80 percent of the Marylanders transferred to ICE by state and local authorities. Accordingly, without the Community Trust Act, the 287(g) ban will have accomplished virtually nothing.

I appreciate that my state legislature is working to close this loophole and protect our population. I support this bill because I come from a family of immigrants, and this country welcomed us after so many in my family were persecuted in their countries of origin. It hurts now to see our Federal government persecuting immigrants who just want to live in peace like my family did. I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0791.