



COUNTY COUNCIL OF HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

NOLANDA ROBERT

Council Member, District A

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RE: Support for SB 245 – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Dear Judicial Committee Senators [Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, Committee Members: Charles, Folden, Henson, James, Love, McKay, Muse, Sydnor, & West]:

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 245, which prohibits the State, counties, sheriffs, and other local entities in Maryland from entering into or maintaining immigration enforcement agreements—specifically those under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act—and requires the termination of such existing agreements by July 1, 2026.

As a longtime advocate for community trust, safety, and equity, I believe SB 245 is a necessary step toward ensuring that Maryland's law enforcement agencies are focused on protecting all residents, regardless of immigration status. Current partnerships between some Maryland counties and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through 287(g) agreements undermine this principle and create environments of fear and division, particularly in immigrant communities.

While some argue that these agreements enhance public safety, research and community feedback tell a different story. Studies show that when local law enforcement is entangled with federal immigration enforcement, immigrants are less likely to report crimes, serve as witnesses, or seek protection from abuse out of fear that any contact with police could lead to detention or deportation. This not only erodes trust but also makes all Maryland communities less safe.

Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown's recent guidance (2025) clarified that state and local agencies are not obligated to enforce civil immigration laws and may be liable for detaining individuals without judicial warrants. SB 245 reinforces this legal clarity and upholds constitutional principles by drawing a clear boundary between civil immigration matters and state public safety responsibilities.

Moreover, mandating the termination of existing agreements by July 1, 2026, allows jurisdictions time to responsibly transition out of these partnerships without disrupting operations or public confidence.

I urge you and your colleagues to support SB 245 and stand with immigrant families, advocates, and public safety leaders who know that true community policing cannot coexist with federal immigration enforcement.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to a more just and inclusive Maryland.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nolanda Robert".

Nolanda Robert