



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Senator William C. Smith Jr., Chair
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

DATE: 3/12/2026

RE: SB0988 - Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitations

The MLLC supports SB0988 - Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitations

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of SB0988.

Beginning in January 2025, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were reauthorized to conduct arrests at courthouses, a practice previously prohibited by the Biden administration¹. Increasing arrests outside of courthouses have created a chilling effect for the Latino community. Arrests have stoked fear of participating in court processes as victims or witnesses due to uncertainty of who will be arrested². These practices have eroded public trust in the judicial system. For Maryland in particular, data shows that ICE made 23 arrests at courthouses in 2025.³

Other states have begun to address the concern of arrests at courthouses. Massachusetts has seen a three fold increase in ICE arrests at courthouses, leading the state to consider legislation requiring ICE officers to obtain judicial warrants for arrests⁴. Similarly, other states such as Connecticut and Illinois, have already adopted legislation to restrict federal law enforcement officers from conducting enforcement actions outside of courthouses. This bill would afford the Maryland Latino community similar protections from federal law enforcement. This bill ensures that immigrants can attend courthouse proceedings without fear of being ambushed and subsequently put into removal proceedings.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB0988.

¹ [Stateline. ICE courthouse arrests meet resistance from Democratic states. 19 Nov. 2025.](#)

² [WBUR. ICE agents are staking out local courthouses. As they've roamed the halls, Mass. court arrests tripled. 17 Dec 2025.](#)

³ [Data: ICE enforcement arrests nearly tripled in Maryland in 2025](#)

⁴ Ibid.