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The Honorable J. Sandy Bartlett
House Judiciary Committee
101 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT OF

House Bill #444: Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender, trans-led community power building organization dedicated to Maryland's trans community. Because Trans Maryland believes in protecting the civil rights of all Marylanders—regardless of how they came to be here—from oppressive policing that is all-too-often based more on racial profiling than on legitimate law enforcement interests, we are testifying today in strong support of House Bill 444.

Over the past year, we have seen a dramatic increase in Maryland jurisdictions entering into immigration enforcement agreements, commonly referred to as 287(g) agreements, with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), with the number more than doubling from three counties before 2025 to eight counties today. While the terms of these agreements differ, they all have the effect of making Maryland police complicit in the ongoing human rights violations committed by ICE in the name of immigration enforcement.

Since January 2025 alone, those abuses have included:

- The systematized racial profiling of Latinx based on their ethnicity—a practice acknowledged and endorsed by the conservative Supreme Court on its shadow docket;¹
- The extended—and often highly abusive—detainment of American citizens without evidence of a crime;²

¹ *Noem v. Perdomo*, 606 U.S. __ (Sept. 25, 2025), available at https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/25a169_5h25.pdf.

² See Nicole Foy, "We Found That More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents. They've Been Kicked, Dragged and Detained for Days," *Pro Publica* (October 16, 2025), available at <https://www.propublica.org/article/immigration-dhs-american-citizens-arrested-detained-against-will>.



- The systemic abuse and neglect of people in ICE custody,³ leading to the deaths of at least 32 people in 2025;⁴
- The illegal arrest, deportation to El Salvador CECOT megaprison, and re-arrest of Kilmar Abrego Garcia upon his return to the United States;⁵ and, most recently,
- The extrajudicial killing of Renee Good in Minneapolis—a killing the US Justice Department has refused to investigate in good faith.⁶

To be clear, this is only a small sampling of the ongoing civil rights violations committed by and in the name of ICE. While it is not in Maryland's power to stop these abuses from happening, this state does have the power to say that it will not be a party to them, will not condone them, and will not assist in their perpetuation. By prohibiting any entity or agent of the state of Maryland from participating in a 287(g) agreement with ICE, House Bill 444 takes a critical step to end our complicity in ICE's abuses. For these reasons, Trans Maryland **strongly urges a favorable report of House Bill 444.**

³ See, e.g., Claudia Lauer, "Senate report details dozens of cases of medical neglect in federal immigration detention centers," *PBS News* (Oct. 31, 2025), available at <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/senate-report-details-dozens-of-cases-of-medical-neglect-in-federal-immigration-detention-centers>.

⁴ See Maanvi Singh et al, "2025 was ICE's deadliest year in two decades," *The Guardian* (Jan. 4, 2026), available at <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/jan/04/ice-2025-deaths-timeline>.

⁵ See Travis Loller, "Justice Department pushed to prosecute Kilmar Abrego Garcia only after deportation mistake, judge's order says," *PBS News* (Dec. 30, 2025), available at <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/justice-department-pushed-to-prosecute-kilmar-abrego-garcia-only-after-deportation-mistake-judges-order-says>.

⁶ See Robert Mackey, "Justice department 'not investigating' Renee Good killing in contrast to 2020 inquiry on George Floyd death," *The Guardian* (Jan. 18, 2026), available at <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/18/justice-department-ice-renee-good-george-floyd-minneapolis>.