

Bill Title: HB1575 – Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)
Position: SUPPORT (FAV)
To: Judiciary Committee
Date: February 25, 2025

Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee,

Quaker Voice of Maryland (QVM) is a faith-based advocacy group that advocates for policies that are just, compassionate, equitable, and respectful of the inherent worth of every person and the Earth upon which we live. Quakers (Friends) across Maryland shared with us their concern for immigrant protections. QVM sees HB1575 as an urgent priority in response to increasingly aggressive immigration enforcement policies.

The Community Trust Act draws a clear line between Maryland law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement. Currently, most local jails and police across Maryland voluntarily hold and transfer individuals to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (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 mass deportation machine, undermines the presumption of innocence, and erodes the community trust that keeps all Marylanders safe.

The Quaker experience of the Divine affects what we do in our personal lives, what we believe and how we work for changes in the wider world. "Testimonies" are what Quakers call the ways we have found to live and act based on our beliefs. We embrace the knowledge that all persons are children of the Divine and brothers and sisters of one another. **Our spiritual and social testimonies, including those of peace, community, integrity, and equality, lead us to submit this testimony supporting HB1575.** Therefore, many Friends are led to support and protect vulnerable people in our communities, including immigrant f/Friends. These leadings are both a spiritual expression of a relationship with our Creator, and a social commitment to every individual in our communities.

Friends strive to live lives of radical wholeness and truth, where inner spiritual convictions match outward actions and words, treating all people with equal respect, regardless of status. Accepting the seizure and removal of f/Friends from our communities, without a judicial warrant or proof of wrong-doing, conflicts with these spiritual and social commitments. 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. Therefore, we respectfully request a FAVORABLE report for this HB1575. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

Erinn Camp Mansour

Working Group Member, on behalf of Quaker Voice of Maryland

Organization email: quakervoicemd@gmail.com