

**SUPPORT**  
**Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**  
**House Bill 444**

**House Judiciary Committee**  
**January 27, 2026**

**Paul Lemle**  
**President**

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 444, which prohibits state and local law enforcement from entering into certain immigration enforcement agreements.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than 40 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

House Bill 444 is part of a number of legislative initiatives that MSEA is supporting this session to lend our voice to protect students in schools and their communities. The dangerous escalation of immigration enforcement in communities across the country is an authoritarian tactic with little regard for due process and equal protection that threatens safety, civil liberties, and democratic values across the country. Students and educators are traumatized by these actions, and communities everywhere are living under fear. We see the effects in classrooms: empty seats, disrupted learning, rising fear, and growing demand for mental health support. Students cannot learn when they are afraid for their safety or the safety of their families.

Educators have a moral and professional responsibility to keep all students safe, primarily in schools, and also to advocate for safe communities for our students and their families. We believe this is more than an immigration issue. This is a human rights issue, a civil rights issue, and a democracy issue.

**MSEA adds our voice to this critical moment that requires a renewed commitment to civil rights and social justice and urges a favorable report on House Bill 444.**