

**Testimony on House Bill 309 – Favorable  
Judicial Facilities – Stops, Detentions, and Arrests – Limitations  
House Judiciary Committee  
February 2, 2026**

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

My name is Jessica Estrogano, and I am writing to provide favorable testimony in support of House Bill 309, *Judicial Facilities – Stops, Detentions, and Arrests – Limitations*.

Recent actions by the federal administration have created fear and uncertainty for immigrant communities across the country, including here in Maryland. We have seen troubling examples in Minneapolis and other states where individuals have been subjected to aggressive and disruptive enforcement actions in and around judicial facilities. These practices undermine public trust and threaten fundamental principles of due process.

For decades, immigrants have attended court hearings, required immigration proceedings, and scheduled check-ins with Immigration and Customs Enforcement without fear of arrest at the courthouse. Recent policy changes have reversed that long-standing practice, effectively forcing individuals to choose between complying with mandatory court appearances and risking detention, or missing court and facing automatic deportation orders. This impossible choice has led to increased absenteeism and has compromised the integrity and effectiveness of the judicial system.

House Bill 309 would prohibit individuals from being stopped, detained, or arrested for certain civil offenses while they are in a judicial facility, or while traveling within one mile of a judicial facility for the purpose of attending a hearing, meeting, or other official proceeding, except under limited circumstances. The bill also appropriately provides that evidence obtained in violation of these protections is inadmissible in proceedings under the jurisdiction of State courts or State and local agencies.

HB 309 is a necessary safeguard that protects the rights of all Maryland residents and upholds the integrity, accessibility, and fairness of our courts.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote favorably on this bill.

Sincerely,

Jessica Estrogano  
Columbia, Maryland