



Testimony on House Bill 444 – Favorable
HB444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition
House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

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

Indivisible Howard County offers favorable testimony in support of **HB 444-Public Safety-Immigration Enforcement Agreement-Prohibition.**

Established in 2017 as part of the national Indivisible movement, Indivisible Howard County has more than 1,500 members focused on making our state safe, equitable, and welcoming for all residents. Our Immigration Action Team collaborates with other immigrant support groups statewide. In 2025 we have distributed more than 7,700 Know Your Rights cards to community members, hosted Know Your Rights trainings, established a Rapid Response Team Network, and lobbied for immigrant rights in Annapolis.

HB444 prohibits immigrant enforcement agreements in Maryland and terminates existing 287 (g) agreements. These agreements are inconsistent with Maryland's values and long-held commitment to diversity. For decades immigrants—documented and undocumented—have been welcomed in Maryland. They have played a vital role in Maryland's economy, growing our state population, boosting innovation and entrepreneurship, and paying more than \$100 million annually in state and local taxes. (<https://www.marylandcomptroller.gov/content/dam/mdcomp/md/reports/research/immigration-economy.pdf>)

Indivisible Howard County supports HB444 for the following reasons:

- 287 (g) agreements take up county staff time and resources that should be focused on keeping our communities safe. Law enforcement positions are unfilled in many Maryland jurisdictions. We cannot burden existing officers with additional responsibilities.
- 287(g) agreements can cost counties money. While ICE covers the cost of training deputized officers, state and local governments are responsible for all personnel costs, including salaries, benefits, and overtime, as well as all administrative supplies (<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/287g-program-immigration#:~:text=Researchers%20have%20found%20that%20287,Latino%20and%20Black%20community%20residents>).
- 287(g) agreements promote racism and racial profiling. The overwhelming number of people detained through the 287(g) program are Black or Latino.
- 287 (g) programs do not protect the public against serious crime. Nationally and in Maryland, the majority of people detained through 287(g) programs have no criminal convictions.

- 287(g) programs undermine public trust in law enforcement leading to less cooperation with police. Immigrants are less likely to come forward as witnesses, provide tips, and seek protection. (<https://www.aclu.org/publications/license-abuse-how-ices-287g-program-empowers-racist-sheriffs>)

While there have been widely publicized cases of violent crimes committed by immigrants, multiple studies have shown that both undocumented and documented immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes than people born in the United States.

Indivisible Howard County urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue **a favorable report on HB444.**

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