

HB0630 - SUPPORT
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HB0630– Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Original Design and Construction

House Judiciary Committee
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Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis & Members of the Committee:

My name is William Mascioli. I have lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, for more than 40 years. I raised my children here. I am among a group of neighbors who last year formed North Woodside Civil Resistance out of concern for the threat to our democracy posed by the actions of the Trump administration. I am writing to urge a favorable report on HB0630, Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Original Design and Construction. This bill is crucial if Maryland is going to stand up against the racist and authoritarian misconduct being perpetrated under the guise of an immigration policy.

ICE plans to spend \$38 billion to retrofit warehouses and other sites for immigration detention centers. Thirty-eight billion dollars is the equivalent of the combined budgets of 22 states. It is all too evident that these “centers” will be part of ICE’s obscene apparatus of abuse. Based on reports of conditions in existing ICE facilities and the demographic of ICE’s detainees, these detention centers would in fact be more accurately denominated as concentration camps. HB0630 would help prevent the establishment of these immigrant concentration camps in Maryland by barring the operation of immigration detention facilities in any building not originally built for the purpose of detaining people. In other words, it would exempt Maryland from ICE’s \$38 billion retrofitting spree.

It has been well established that ICE is not detaining “the worst of the worst.” Instead, ICE is making sweeping arrests based on skin color, language spoken, place of employment, and even showing up as legally required for one's immigration hearings. Once detained, our neighbors have little recourse or remedy. History has taught us where this conduct leads. HB0630 sends a clear message that ICE concentration camps are not welcome in Maryland. Accordingly, I urge a favorable report and thank you for your consideration.