

Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests – Limitations / HB 0309

February 2, 2026

Official Testimony

Position: FAVORABLE

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Murphy, and I'm a Baltimore City resident and a member of District 46. I am writing in support of HB 0309 to put limitations on stops, detentions, and arrests at judicial facilities.

The Trump administration's directive for its U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to target immigrants in courthouses has forced individuals to make an untenable choice between 1) attending mandatory hearings or check-ins and risking arrest or abduction, or 2) missing court appointments and facing automatic deportation orders. It is wildly unethical to force people to risk their safety to comply with immigration court system requirements, and this has predictably led to a surge in absenteeism.

Furthermore, arrests and abductions in and around any court, including family, traffic, immigration and criminal courts, create a "chilling effect" that undermines the broader justice system by discouraging victims and witnesses from entering judicial facilities and participating in legal proceedings.

HB 309, if enacted, would prohibit a person from being stopped, detained, or arrested for certain civil offenses while the individual is in a judicial facility or is traveling within 1 mile of a judicial facility for the purpose of attending a meeting, a hearing, or another official proceeding in the judicial facility.

HB 309 would also make any evidence collected at the detention or arrest inadmissible in court, and allows for civil action to be taken against the agents or officers that violate this Act. These are important safeguards, which would allow immigrants to safely comply with court requirements and maintain or pursue pathways for residency and citizenship, and hold federal agents accountable for bad-faith acts in the state of Maryland.

At a time when ICE is terrorizing communities across the country—abducting, assaulting, and killing people—Maryland must set a standard to uphold democratic principles and rule of law, and protect all those who reside here.

I respectfully urge this committee to **support HB 0309, Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests – Limitations.**

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Murphy
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District 46