

**Testimony in Favor of HB 444**  
**Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition**

DATE: January 21, 2026

TO: Honorable Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the House Judiciary Committee, Maryland General Assembly

FROM: Rosanne B. Hanratty, Ellicott City MD

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony **IN FAVOR of HB 444 Public Safety Immigration Enforcement Agreements—Prohibition**

I am a resident of Howard County and chair the Immigration Mobilization Committee of the Justice and Peace Committee at St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Community Baltimore. I am also a member of Indivisible Howard County and, importantly, the proud granddaughter of immigrants. I come from a very large law enforcement family. In fact, my father served for 32 years as a detective with the New York Police Department. He worked with immigrant communities and impressed upon me the importance of trust in law enforcement.

My opposition to 287 (g) agreements between law enforcement and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is grounded both in my faith and my role as citizen.

My faith calls upon me to recognize all people as children of God, entitled to dignity and care. Consistent with the teaching of the biblical prophets, the words of Jesus, and Catholic social teaching, my faith has led to my participation in parish immigration mobilization efforts. In addition to advocacy and direct ministry to others regardless of immigration status, we as a parish publicly witness and pray the Rosary monthly on Hopkins Plaza in front of the Fallon Federal Building in Baltimore, for all immigrants, migrants and those in danger of deportation, *especially for those detained by ICE in that building.*

As a citizen, I recognize that under the US Constitution all people, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to due process and equal protection under the law. Sadly, we have seen since January 20 2025, that immigration enforcement consistently violates both basic human dignity and rights provided under the Constitution and law.

*Immigrants are integral members of our communities.* They make communities more vibrant and contribute to the social and economic fabric of localities and Maryland as a whole. An April 2024 Policy Brief from the Office of the Comptroller of Maryland, Brooke Lierman, highlights how critical immigration is to Maryland's population and labor force. Immigration augments insufficient labor supply and provides untapped talent in jobs such as health care, research, construction and technology. In issuing the report, Comptroller Lierman stated, "...immigrants are a significant asset to our economy and [this report] demonstrates the need for policies as well as investments that will allow them to participate more fully in our economy and lead to additional growth for our entire state." (News Release: Comptroller of Maryland: Comptroller Brooke Lierman Releases New Report on Immigration and Maryland Economy, April 18, 2024)

The Comptroller's report emphasizes that immigrants are critical to Maryland's labor force. Maryland's population and labor force have a larger proportion of immigrants than neighboring states. In fact, immigrants make up fully 21% of Maryland's labor force. Immigration offsets large declines in natural population growth rates in Maryland, and the vast majority of immigrants enter Maryland legally. 287 (g) agreements between law enforcement and ICE undermine these documented benefits.

Eight Maryland counties have 287 (g) agreements, up from three before President Trump took office on January 20, 2025.

*These agreements make our communities less safe.* Crimes may go unreported; victims of violent crimes such as rape are not protected; and dangerous offenders remain at large. Critical medical and other assistance will not be rendered if immigrants and members of communities-including US citizens-will not contact law enforcement out of fear of their working in concert with ICE.

*Nor do 287 (g) agreements prevent crime.* Montgomery County, Maryland's most diverse county, does not have a 287 (g) agreement and saw a 7% drop in crime in 2024; Cecil and Harford, which do have 287 (g) agreements, saw no such decrease. Baltimore City saw record-breaking reductions in murders in 2025. Baltimore City does not have a 287 (g) agreement with ICE. Moreover, 287 (g) agreements largely target innocent and low-level offenders, not convicted violent criminals. From 2008 to 2025, in Frederick County, fully 80% of 287 (g) detainees were individuals who allegedly committed only a misdemeanor, including traffic offenses.

In the face of attacks by ICE, immigrants and their families--including US citizens--seek only protection for themselves and their communities, i.e. only what they are entitled to under law and the Constitution. We have seen with the killing of Renee Good and the brutal actions of immigration enforcers in Minneapolis and other communities, that even US citizens who support the rights of immigrants, and peacefully protest unconstitutional actions, are subject to brutality, violence, even death. Consider how much worse this would be if the Minneapolis Police Department had a 287 (g) agreement with ICE.

***Please give a favorable report to HB 444 to ban such agreements statewide.***