

I have lived in Frederick County for more than 30 years. We have a longstanding agreement to cooperate with Federal immigrant officers via 287(g). For all that time, we have had a climate of fear for immigrants – perhaps intentionally so on the part of some law enforcement. Now, with ICE's brutal new transgressions, that fear becomes terror, directed at people of color of any status, and those who support them. Who is next? Muslims already have been targeted. Maybe any and all who exercise freedom of speech.

All my grandparents were immigrants, as are my wife and her children. I am nearing 80, and watching our democracy disintegrate. The Maryland legislature can play a small but significant role defending what is left. Passing HB0444 is one step in that direction.