



**Testimony on House Bill 1575 – Favorable
HB1575 – Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration
Enforcement - Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)**

Judiciary Committee

February 25, 2026

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

We are writing to urge you to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1575.

Montgomery County Immigrant Rights Collective (MoCo IRC) submits this testimony in support of the Community Trust Act, a critical next step after banning 287(g) agreements by closing loopholes of informal collaboration between local law enforcement and ICE.

Our coalition works directly with impacted Maryland families and operates in collaboration with immigration attorneys, organizers, and community allies across the DMV region. We help connect families impacted by immigration detention or deportation with legal resources, financial aid, and community support. Our position is informed by firsthand experience responding to the harms these facilities cause, which are predictable and preventable.

We support HB 1575 because, despite the end of formal 287(g) agreements, local jails and law enforcement agencies across Maryland continue to voluntarily collaborate with ICE. Individuals are being notified on, held for, and transferred to ICE without a judicial warrant. These practices raise serious constitutional concerns, waste taxpayer dollars, and undermine public safety by eroding trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

From a public safety perspective, informal collaboration with ICE deters community members from seeking help when they need it most. One of our educators described how families are afraid to call MCPD, leading to crimes going unreported. In some neighborhoods, families have stopped visiting local parks due to concerns about loitering, public intoxication, and inappropriate behavior, yet they are fearful of reporting these incidents. After violent incidents in and around school communities, parents are living in constant fear, afraid to leave their homes, afraid to walk across the street, afraid to drive to medical or dental appointments. For many, seeking help has become a risk calculation.

This fear is not abstract. ICE agents have used elementary school parking lots as staging areas for enforcement operations, further destabilizing trust and spreading panic throughout school communities.

HB 1575 is a measured and reasonable policy. It requires a judicial warrant before an individual can be held for ICE and prohibits local officers from proactively contacting ICE about individuals

in their custody. It does not prevent the federal government from enforcing immigration laws. Rather, it ensures that Maryland resources are not used to carry out federal civil immigration enforcement and that constitutional standards are upheld.

From an economic perspective, collaboration with immigration detention systems harms local communities in concrete and measurable ways. These enforcement practices drive immigrant-owned businesses, many of which have operated in Maryland for generations, to scale back, relocate, or close entirely. When businesses shut their doors or leave the state, Maryland loses sales tax revenue, payroll tax contributions, commercial rent stability, and local employment opportunities. Workers lose jobs, storefront vacancies increase, and neighborhood commercial corridors decline.

One of our community members, a small business owner, shared the following:

*“I contribute from sales tax revenue through my businesses and payroll taxes from people I employ. What kind of financial burden has someone like me, an immigrant who was once an undocumented child, placed on the American economy? Everything that this country gave my family when we first arrived has been paid back a **hundredfold**. We were grateful to live in peace, free from violence and fear. But I don’t feel like that anymore. I am being told that I am not welcome here. That my money, my taxes, and financial contributions are no longer valued.*

*How many others like me are being cut off from the opportunity to contribute back to this country? How many young lives are you stopping from flourishing by allowing the lawlessness of ICE as it operates today, as a paramilitary group like the one that left my country of origin in ashes? Allowing this agency to continue to operate in this format is burdening small business owners and immigrant-owned enterprises in particular. **Sales have dropped 30-50% on top of an already struggling economy.** What will the state of Maryland do without the millions of dollars businesses like mine contribute annually? By not supporting this legislation, you are cutting off a significant source of revenue to our state! Opponents will say that by supporting these types of laws, we are cutting off funds from our federal government. So what kind of leadership does our state have if we have to depend solely on federal dollars and diminish the labor and contribution of its residents?”*

Policies that entangle local law enforcement with immigration enforcement destabilize families, reduce economic participation, and weaken public safety. Maryland should not have to choose between constitutional governance and fiscal stability. HB1575 affirms both. We must do everything in our power to stop this ongoing harm to our families, our businesses, and our communities.

We respectfully urge you to support HB 1575 and to affirm Maryland’s commitment to public health, community safety, and dignity for all. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Montgomery County Immigrant Rights Collective