



March 09, 2026

The Frederick County Democratic Central Committee (FCDCC) strongly urges the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) to expeditiously adopt H.R. 630, which was introduced on an emergency basis on February 2, 2026. The bill "prohibit[s] a person from operating an immigration detention facility at a building, structure, or facility that was not originally designed and constructed for the purpose of housing or detaining individuals."

Emergency adoption of this bill would have an immediate effect on Central Maryland. It would prohibit DHS from going forward with its decision to purchase for \$102 million an 825,620 square-foot warehouse located near Hagerstown, MD, for use as a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) "Baltimore Processing Facility." The FCDCC joins Gov. Wes Moore, Rep. April McClain Delaney, the American Civil Liberties Union, and many others who strenuously oppose the warehouse's conversion into what in reality is a prison.

This "processing facility" would be used to process and hold thousands of adults and children who solely have committed the civil violation of being undocumented immigrants. ICE could also use the facility to hold American citizens who have been peacefully protesting ICE's presence and actions. As seen elsewhere in the country, the conditions inside these facilities are inhumane.

DHS's creation of a prison in Central Maryland or elsewhere in Maryland very well may indicate that former U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristy Noem's untrained, masked vigilantes soon will be targeting Hagerstown, Frederick City, and their surrounding counties that are home to large immigrant communities. We have already witnessed such abhorrent activity and disastrous results in other U.S. cities over the last year, including, most recently, Minneapolis and St. Paul.

We simply cannot stand by while ICE violently arrests Maryland residents in violation of the U.S. Constitution and then deports them to unknown whereabouts, destroying their hopes for a better life for themselves and their families.

We implore MGA to adopt H.R. 630 as soon as possible to halt, or at least significantly delay, DHS's use of commercial buildings and warehouses as ICE holding facilities.

Respectfully,

Mari Lee

Mari Lee, Chair

On January 14, 2026, DHS sent a letter to the Historic District Commission, Washington County Planning and Zoning Department, outlining its intentions to buy the warehouse. That letter stated that developing the warehouse would involve the "construction of holding and processing spaces, office space, public-facing visitor space and installation of amenities, such as cafeterias, bathrooms, and health care spaces" and, among other things, "installing, upgrading, or rehabilitating existing parking areas, fencing, site lighting, landscaping, drainage/stormwater, recreation areas and cameras. Tentage and guard shacks may also be installed."

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