



Testimony on House Bill 444 – Favorable

SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition
House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

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

Out For Justice offers favorable testimony in support of **HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

Out For Justice is a member-led criminal justice reform organization with the mission to engage, educate, and empower individuals impacted by the legal system to build collective power for dismantling systemic oppression and harmful policies. We strive to humanize marginalized communities, prevent criminalization, reduce recidivism and promote second chances and successful reintegration through advocacy, education and supportive programming.

At its core, **HB 444** is about upholding Maryland's values – fairness, dignity, and justice for all. This bill affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or diverting state and local resources into federal immigration enforcement. Instead, Maryland should remain focused on community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law by prohibiting immigration enforcement agreements such as 287(g).

While OFJ is a statewide organization, the majority of our members live in the Baltimore area, which has seen a 59% drop in homicides since 2021 without any 287g agreements. Conversely, Frederick County has had 287g agreements since 2008, and have only seen a 4% decrease in overall crime.

The 287(g) program has a documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. It diverts local law enforcement away from their primary role of protecting public safety and erodes trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities. When trust is broken, community safety suffers. Black and justice-impacted communities have long struggled to trust institutions that claim to protect them while repeatedly excluding them from decision-making processes. 287(g) agreements further undermine confidence in government, deepen existing inequities and ultimately harm our public safety goals. For these reasons, **Out For Justice** urges the House Judiciary Committee to issue a **favorable report** on **HB444**.