

Dear Honorable Chair Bartlett, Vice-Chair Davis and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Linda Girdner and I live in Gambrills, MD. I am writing to urge you to support **HB1575 Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement - Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)**.

Most people in local jails have not been convicted of any crime. They are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law, not in the eyes of any law enforcement officer. Keep in mind that coming into the country without proper papers is not a crime. It is a civil offense. Local police should not be allowed to hand people who have had no day in court over to ICE. And to detain them for minor offenses so that they can hand them over is truly unconscionable. These are not the “worst of the worst” for having a cracked tail light or some other misdemeanor.

This practice not only undermines the presumption of innocence but also harms public safety by eroding trust and discouraging community members from engaging with local law enforcement. The residents of Maryland depend on you, as our elected representatives in the General Assembly, to rein in law enforcement when they have gone beyond their legally prescribed duties to keep Marylanders safe and instead cooperate to undermine basic Constitutional rights.

The Community Trust Act legislation would affirmatively ban correctional facilities from detaining, or prolonging the detention of, people based on suspicion that an individual may have violated civil immigration laws. It would also ban correctional facilities and law enforcement from notifying federal immigration authorities that an individual is in custody without a subpoena or judicial order and prohibit the transfer of individuals to ICE from state correctional facilities unless presented with a criminal warrant signed by a federal judge.

We have seen how federal law enforcement, such as ICE and CPB, have violated people’s rights. Let’s not let that be a slippery slope for our law enforcement officers throughout Maryland communities. Therefore, I ask that you support **HB1575 The Community Trust Act** in committee and on the floor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Girdner

Member,

Showing Up for Racial Justice Annapolis and Anne Arundel County