

**Testimony on House Bill – Favorable
HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements –
Prohibition**

House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

January 23, 2026

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

My name is Kelly Hodge-Williams and I am a resident of Baltimore City Maryland. I am writing in strong support of HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition.

At a time when Maryland faces competing priorities and limited local resources, the 287(g) program is a wasteful and dangerous misuse of taxpayer funds. Instead of improving safety, it undermines trust, encourages racial profiling, and diverts attention away from addressing serious crimes. Evidence consistently shows that 287(g) programs disproportionately target Black, Latino, and immigrant communities — often detaining, and physically harming, individuals with little to no criminal history. These programs fracture families, disrupt local policing priorities, and foster fear that ripples throughout our schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

Participation in 287(g) not only creates inefficiency but also fuels constitutional violations and civil rights abuses. Investigations across the country have documented racially disparate treatment and unlawful detention under these agreements. When local law enforcement acts as an extension of federal immigration officers, the result is predictable: widespread fear and distrust. Victims and witnesses of crimes—especially in immigrant communities—become afraid to come forward, report crimes or cooperate with police, making us *all* less safe.

For all these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of HB 444.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Hodge-Williams
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