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TESTIMONY ON HB1575 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

**Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement - Prohibitions
(Community Trust Act)**

TO: Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee

My name is Kathryn Wenner, and I am a resident of District 18. I am writing in support of HB1575, the Community Trust Act.

I am a retired journalist with decades of involvement in coverage from the world's most dire zones of conflict and human suffering. My awareness of the safety and cleanliness and security of my life as an American began as a 7-year-old in impoverished South Korea, where I lived a few thousand yards from children my own age in tar-paper shacks. When Vietnamese people who escaped after the fall of Saigon began arriving in large numbers in my hometown of Arlington, Virginia, I rejoiced. Years later, when the apartment buildings on my Arlington street filled with people who had fled the violence in El Salvador and Guatemala, I felt joy every day that my country was able to offer them a place to live in dignity and safety.

Montgomery County, where I have lived for 30 years, is a strong, vibrant, thriving community in large part because of all the people who live here who were not born here. That has always been the story of our nation, and it will remain so. All people, no matter where they were born or what language they speak, deserve to live in safety and without fear. But right now, federal agents are assaulting, arresting and disappearing immigrant members of our communities and those who are standing up against these federal actions.

I support HB1575 because local jails and law enforcement across Maryland are voluntarily collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement: holding people who have not been convicted, only accused, past their release dates and notifying ICE about individuals in custody, all without a judicial warrant. This is unconstitutional, wastes taxpayer dollars, and makes our communities less safe by eroding trust between residents and law enforcement.

HB1575 simply requires a judicial warrant before anyone is held for ICE, and it stops local officers from proactively contacting ICE about people in their custody. It does not prevent the federal government from enforcing immigration laws; it just ensures that Maryland is not doing ICE's job.

As the Bible says in the Book of Deuteronomy: "Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice."

I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB1575.**