

Monday, March 2, 2026

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am a resident of Baltimore City and District 41. I am also a clinical psychologist working with trans youth and a practitioner of evidence-based therapeutic practices supporting members of the LGBTQ+ community. I am testifying in **strong opposition** to **HB719: Prohibition Against Sanctuary Policies**.

President Trump's cruel, racist, and xenophobic attacks on immigrants has continued in his second administration. It is incumbent upon Maryland to protect the people that he is dedicated to demonizing: our friends, family members, and neighbors, hard-working people who help build our communities. They don't deserve to live in fear.

Maryland's large immigrant community makes up nearly a third of all Maryland healthcare support workers, a third of the state's building maintenance and groundskeepers, and supports a thriving and diverse small business community. In 2018, Maryland's immigrant communities were contributing \$8 billion in federal and \$4 billion in state taxes, providing \$2 billion in business revenue from entrepreneurship, and added tens of billions to Maryland's economy with their purchasing power<sup>1</sup>. We are stronger when our immigrant communities feel safe and supported in our cities and state. And under this current political climate, protections are needed more now than ever.

**HB719 would majorly undermine the State of Maryland's ability to protect its residents from being targeted for harm.** Barring sanctuary policies in Maryland would have several possible negative impacts on immigrant communities and all Marylanders, including increased racial profiling, community fear, disruption of local policing priorities, negative effects on education, and potential civil rights violations. The harm caused by this bill would almost certainly disproportionately impact Latino and Black communities. Opposing this bill is essential for protecting and restoring public trust in law enforcement and keeping Marylanders safe.

Finally, **I strongly oppose HB719 on the basis of what this bill would communicate to immigrant Marylanders: that Maryland is not a state where immigrants are welcome, supported, and treated as citizens with equal rights to every other Marylander.** It is categorically unethical, harmful, and bigoted to limit and erode participation in public life for a small and vulnerable minority of people. I am proud of our state's standing as a

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<sup>1</sup> [Immigrants in Maryland; American Immigration Council](#)

<sup>6</sup> [The Atlantic: How Ice Lost Its Guardrails](#)

comparative safe haven for immigrants compared to many other states in the US, and in the strongest possible terms I believe it is imperative that we continue to protect immigrants' rights in the state of Maryland.

I do not want Maryland to use our resources to help President Trump conduct his racist, cruel anti-immigrant campaign. We must stand up for our friends, family, and neighbors by refusing to be complicit in his xenophobia. It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote in **opposition** to **HB719: Prohibition Against Sanctuary Policies**.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Katherine Blaha  
Baltimore, MD 21209