

February 23, 2026

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**Testimony in Support of HB1575- Favorable
Correctional Services and Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement – Prohibitions
(Community Trust Act)**

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

FROM: Carol Stern

I am testifying in favor of HB1575 as a resident of Montgomery County's District 16 and a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda.

My sacred text and tradition teach us to welcome the stranger, for we were strangers in the land of Egypt. Leviticus 19:34 explicitly instructs us to treat immigrants in our land the same as native citizens. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan wrote "teach us to respect the integrity of every human soul be it that of a friend or stranger, child or adult." When we are working to reform our immigration justice system, we must demand that it operates in accordance with these deeply held Jewish beliefs.

Passing the Community Trust Act is crucial for public safety and for building community trust. SB 791 will go along way to help protect our local immigrant community by ending local voluntary cooperation with ICE, restricting ICE from arresting anyone without a proper judicial warrant, outlawing discrimination based on immigration status, stopping the use of any state or local resources to voluntarily assist ICE in separating immigrant families, and stopping the unnecessary collection of immigration status. We must have a state where our immigrant residents can feel safe enough to send their children to school, shop at the grocery store and go to work.

All Marylanders, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to equal protection under the law and deserve to be treated with human dignity. In the face of unprecedented attacks, our immigrant communities in Maryland along with CASA and other non-profits are doing everything they can to protect families and to advocate for their communities. Maryland has the power to stop enabling Trump's ICE agents and be a firewall against authoritarianism. This moment calls for action on the part of the State Legislature. To preserve public safety and public trust for all Marylanders, please pass HB1575.

I respectfully urge a favorable report for HB1575.