

February 16, 2026

HB630 Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Original Design and Construction

Favorable

My name is Charlene Rock-Foster, and I am a resident of Baltimore City. I am writing to express my support for HB630. I am deeply concerned about the practice of using buildings that were not originally designed for habitation to house individuals, including immigrants accused of illegal status or activities.

Upon researching, I was unable to find any credible data that justifies the need for additional detention centers, particularly those that bypass input from local government and the community. There is also no assurance that the creation of such centers would not impact local resources. From a financial perspective, it is not responsible to allocate state resources to multiple immigration detention centers in Maryland, especially when existing data does not support their necessity.

Current tactics used to detain so-called illegal immigrants are alarming and evoke painful historical parallels, such as slave patrols and Japanese concentration camps in the United States, as well as recent narratives surrounding the detention of youths. I am firmly opposed to the construction or repurposing of any buildings for the purpose of holding immigrant detainees. Such actions risk extending the reach of detention to more citizens born in Maryland under the pretense of removing the "worst of the worst" from our communities.

Thank you for considering this testimony.