

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HB444

January 23, 2026

Good afternoon Delegates,

My name is Lena Amick and I am a Baltimore city resident and a teacher at Parkville High School in Baltimore County Public Schools. I'm reaching out to urge you to vote YES on **HB444**.

287g agreements have no place in Maryland because they are a threat to public safety.

Just today, reports circulated among the students and staff at my school that immigration enforcement vehicles and officers had been seen in the Parkville neighborhoods near the school. Students and parents texted each other in anxiety, afraid to return home or leave the house; counselors and teachers coordinated with students and drove around the neighborhoods to see what was going on. We were all on edge, wondering if a child or parent in our school community would be snatched from their house, ripped from their family, and thrown into detention, regardless of whether they committed any crime.

Our fear is warranted. In Minneapolis this week, **ICE agents have demonstrated a flagrant disregard for the law.** ICE agents used the detention of a five-year-old child to bait his parents into leaving their home, charged into public schools with guns drawn in plainclothes, deployed chemical weapons on peaceful protesters, and murdered a woman in front of her child. Here in Baltimore, ICE continues to arrest, detain, and deport people who have not committed a crime. When law enforcement break the law, we expect them to be punished; instead, this presidential administration celebrates, pardons, and funds them. They are getting away with murder.

ICE no longer is, and never really was, a law enforcement agency. ICE is a terrorist mercenary army tasked with kidnapping, removing, and ethnically cleansing American communities.

Collaborating with ICE impedes the police's ability to keep Marylanders safe. At Parkville today, we didn't get a clear confirmation whether the vehicles spotted in our neighborhoods were ICE or some other law enforcement agency - but, because ICE has a record of hiding their identities and impersonating other agents, we responded as if they were. This is the culture of fear that immigration enforcement has created: **people are scared of all police.** When people are scared of the police, they do not report crimes, serve as witnesses, or cooperate with legal investigations. When people do not trust police to follow the law, social order breaks down. **287g agreements make real policing impossible and put all of us in danger.**

In counties with 287g agreements, local police officers are put in an intolerable position: refuse the orders of the MOU or engage in lawless immigration enforcement. In either case, they are pressured to break the law. This is unfair to officers who took an oath to protect their communities, not do the dirty work of federal immigration enforcement.

In a culture of partisanship and dehumanizing rhetoric, it takes bravery to stand on the side of justice. This bill moves toward defending Marylanders' safety and protects law enforcement officers from compromise. Please help protect my students, their families, and the County police officers in my community, and pass HB444.

Thank you,
Lena Amick

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