

Date of Hearing: Wednesday 2/4/26

Name: Andrew J. Miller

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TESTIMONY ON HB0309 - POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Judicial Facilities – Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitation

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

FROM: Andrew J. Miller

My name is Andrew Miller. I am a resident of District 11B. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0309, Judicial Facilities – Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitation

I am a long-time member and a Past President of Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Stevenson, MD. I am the chair of the Synagogue Social Justice Roundtable, which works with Jews United for Justice and includes representatives from 11 congregations in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County.

We have been working with CASA and other allies on measures at both the local and state level to protect community members against aggressive immigration enforcement that criminalizes anyone of any status whom federal agents believe they can interrogate and detain without due process.

Owing to current policies of the federal government that prioritize deporting as many as people as possible as quickly as possible, we have seen our friends and neighbors abducted while dropping children off at school, appearing at scheduled appointments for court hearings or immigration check-ins, going to work, and otherwise going about their daily business.

Immigrant families include citizens, people with protected status, people seeking asylum and green cards, people who are undocumented, and the spouses, children, siblings, aunts and uncles and cousins of all of the above. Families are a mosaic where people may have different immigration status but depend on one another through a complex web of relationships. Pulling out one thread may unravel the family and destabilize its support system.

Many of these are people who have been here for decades and have raised families, established businesses, and play important roles in the fabric of their community. Many now live in fear that they will be abducted and their families won't be able to reach them or help them. So in the places where this is happening, many now don't go to work, to school, to medical appointments, or to stores to do their shopping. This doesn't just unravel the family; it can unravel the health and the economic well-being of the entire community.

Our economy cannot function without immigrants. A 2024 report from the Maryland Comptroller's office states that "Immigrants have long bolstered Maryland's population, and they are essential for a thriving economy and economic growth." About 17% of Maryland's population are immigrants. If they disappeared tomorrow our economy likely would collapse.

HB0309 concerns just one set of circumstances, namely the situation that occurs when an individual is at a judicial facility for any kind of legal proceeding. If current federal policy were following normal procedures, there might be no need for this bill. Unfortunately we have seen ICE take people even when they show up for appointments or hearings or to participate in court cases, without regard for the reason why they may be there.

HB309 would prohibit detention or arrest for civil offenses or in response to civil detainers, and presumably also applies when there actually is no offense at all because a person is attending a scheduled appointment or proceeding. It also ensures that evidence obtained by violating the prohibition is inadmissible.

I support this bill with amendments that I anticipate will be proposed by CASA; the most important of which is that the bill should be strengthened by specifically requiring a judicial warrant, and that carveouts and exceptions to the conditions described in the text of the bill should be limited.

Therefore I respectfully ask this committee to return a favorable report on HB0309 with amendments.