



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement –
Immigration Enforcement Agreements

Bill Number(s): HB0675

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Date: March 3, 2025

Submitted by: Director Jeremy Browning on behalf of
the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Judiciary Committee

The Hon. J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair
The Hon. Debra Davis, Vice Chair

Testimony on Behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission strongly opposes HB0675. This bill requires certain local law enforcement agencies that operate correctional facilities to enter into immigration enforcement agreements with the federal government and imposes financial penalties on agencies that fail to comply.

By mandating participation in federal immigration enforcement through the jail enforcement model, HB0675 would deepen fear and mistrust in immigrant communities across Maryland. For LGBTQIA+ immigrants, particularly transgender and nonbinary individuals, asylum seekers, and those fleeing violence or persecution, the consequences would be severe.

National data from the [2022 U.S. Transgender Survey](#) underscores the heightened risks of discrimination, violence, and barriers to essential services faced by transgender individuals. Additionally, the [Maryland Trans Survey](#) found that a significant percentage of transgender Marylanders experience verbal harassment, threats, and physical violence. Fear of discrimination often prevents transgender and LGBTQIA+ immigrants from accessing healthcare, law enforcement, and community resources. For LGBTQIA+ individuals without legal immigration status, these challenges are even greater, as the threat of immigration enforcement discourages them from seeking medical care, reporting crimes, or utilizing social services.

HB0675 would further discourage LGBTQIA+ immigrants from reporting crimes, cooperating with investigations, or seeking protection from domestic violence and hate crimes. Survivors of intimate partner violence, trafficking, and other forms of abuse may choose silence over safety if

contact with local law enforcement could trigger immigration enforcement. This undermines public safety for everyone.

For transgender immigrants in particular, detention poses serious risks. Nationally documented cases show that transgender women are frequently housed in facilities inconsistent with their gender identity and face elevated risks of harassment and assault while detained. Expanding formalized cooperation between local correctional facilities and federal immigration authorities increases the likelihood that transgender Marylanders will be funneled into systems that have historically failed to protect them.

Maryland has long worked to build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. HB0675 moves in the opposite direction. It would erode community trust, undermine public safety, and disproportionately harm LGBTQIA+ immigrants and other vulnerable residents.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB0675.

References:

James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Durso, L. E., & Heng-Lehtinen, R. (2024). *Early Insights: A Report of the 2022 U.S. Transgender Survey*. National Center for Transgender Equality, Washington, DC.

Pease, M. V., Taylor, S., Blinder, L., Clements, Z. A., & Galupo, M. P. (2024, March). *Initial findings from the Maryland Trans Survey*. Trans Maryland.