



Testimony on HB 444 - Favorable

HB 444 - Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Bartlett, and Members of the Committee,

Doctors for Camp Closure Maryland chapter offers favorable testimony in support of HB-444 - Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition

Doctors for Camp Closure is a group who advocates for humane and just treatment for immigrants and is very opposed to ICE detention for our immigrant community.

At its core, this bill is about upholding Maryland's values—fairness, dignity, and justice for all. The Maryland Values Act affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or funneling state and local resources into a federal deportation agenda. Instead, Maryland should stand firm in its commitment to community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law - by ending 287(g).

The 287(g) program has a well-documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detentions. It diverts local law enforcement from their primary duty of protecting public safety, forcing them to act as immigration agents rather than community protectors. This erodes trust, particularly among immigrant communities, making people less likely to report crimes or seek help when needed. Ending 287(g) ensures Maryland's resources are used to foster public safety—not help the federal deportation agenda.

We see how ICE detention and ICE raids have a negative impact on the health of our immigrant patients. ICE raids make our patients so fearful that they neglect their health out of fear of deportation. Our mission is to promote good mental and physical health for our patients, while ICE raids have a damaging effect on their health.

I just witnessed 3 young children lose their parents to an ICE raid in Maryland. These children are severely suffering emotionally, physically and financially. 287(g) has no place in the state of Maryland.

As part of the Maryland Immigrant Justice Table, along with CASA, we support a clean bill which will end 287(g) agreements in Maryland, and not to create or mandate new forms of collaboration with ICE. Local jurisdictions already have the discretion to engage with ICE if they choose; ending 287(g) agreements does not limit that existing authority. We strongly support a clean bill that simply terminates 287(g) agreements in Maryland. This is what will bring Maryland closer to our values.

Doctors for Camp Closure Maryland urges the committee to provide a favorable report on HB 444.

Kate Sugarman, MD

Doctors for Camp Closure co leader

Potomac MD