

BILL# SB0245_Judith Fleitman_FAV

I am a new resident of Maryland (Laurel) who has always been committed to Immigrant Justice. My values were formed when I was in 4th Grade, when I read a book called “All-of-a-Kind Family”, which, in essence, was a memoir written about the author and her 4 sisters growing up on the Lower East Side at the turn of the 20th century. They were not a “one-of-a-kind” family, but one of many having parallel experiences as immigrants adjusting to a new way of life, balancing assimilation with tradition, and facing challenges of poverty and xenophobia as they built lives in their new country. Though their experiences, 2 generations later, were not mine, I still could imagine myself in their place, their immigrant struggle being part of my inheritance.

No matter how we came to this country, at some point that “All-of-Kind Family” is the vast majority of us (whether post-immigration or post-emancipation).

Our contemporary immigrant neighbors perpetuate the content of this story, but with unprecedented challenges. They fit into the title “All-of-a-Kind Family”, but far beyond adjustment and biases, they face a monstrous threat from the government -- demonized and targeted by current national policy -- their immigrant hopes and dreams have turned into devastation and fear as the iron hand of our nation’s government threatens them with detention and deportation. As I envisioned myself in a turn-of-the-century immigrant experience, I cannot turn away from imagining myself in the current immigrant circumstance.

That is why I am imploring you to support the bill before you now, eliminating 287(G) agreements throughout Maryland. For all our sakes, my state government must do all that is possible to deter complicity with ICE. No resident of our state should be afraid to go to a supermarket, seek medical attention, seek police help, or send their kids to school because of the all-too-real threat of detention or deportation. Especially in the wake of tragedy and brutality in Minneapolis, whatever restrictions to limiting ICE’s power in our state *can* be implemented, *should* be implemented.

Thank you for your continued service to our state. I count on you, as my elected official, to vote to limit ICE’s reach in Maryland by voting to enact Senate Bill 0245.