



Testimony on House Bill 444 – Favorable

SB 245 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee

Arnolia UMC offers favorable testimony in support of **SB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition.**

We are a United Methodist congregation with approximately 100 active members in Parkville, MD whose faith moves us to advocate for and with immigrant families. We work with immigrant families in our congregation and community to embody a way of being in the world rooted in the inherent value, worth, and dignity of all people.

At its core, **HB 444** is about upholding Maryland's values - fairness, dignity, and justice for all. This bill affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or diverting state and local resources into federal immigration enforcement. Instead, Maryland should remain focused on community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law by prohibiting immigration enforcement agreements such as 287(g).

We understand that family separation is one of the largest predictors of death by suicide within immigrant communities and we bear witness to the pain and fear in our communities because of the threats of separation, violence, and racial profiling at the hands of ICE.

The 287(g) program has a documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. It diverts local law enforcement away from their primary role of protecting public safety and erodes trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities. When trust is broken, community safety suffers.

In Baltimore county, the fear of these enforcement practices hinder the ability for some of our members to feel safe in their own community and have frequently avoided connecting together in worship and study. And within the community, it's been harder to connect to immigrant families to provide them the care and support they deserve.

For these reasons, **Arnolia UMC** urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB 444**.