

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable
HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition
House Judiciary Committee

January 27, 2026

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

Indivisible Baltimore County respectfully submits this testimony in **strong support of House Bill 444**. We urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on this legislation, without amendments**.

Indivisible Baltimore County is a progressive, grassroots civic engagement organization committed to peaceful action, responsive and accountable government, and advancing social, economic, and environmental justice. Our work is grounded in defending democracy and supporting policies that promote and protect the rights and dignity of all people in our communities. These values guide our support for HB 444. As an allied organization, we stand in solidarity with immigrant-led organizations, service providers, and community advocates whose leadership and lived experience must guide policies that affect immigrant communities.

HB 444 takes an important step to strengthen public safety and community trust by prohibiting state and local government entities from entering into or maintaining agreements that deputize local law enforcement to carry out civil immigration enforcement. These agreements blur the line between local public safety responsibilities and federal immigration enforcement, undermining trust between residents and government institutions.

When individuals fear that interactions with local law enforcement or government agencies could lead to immigration consequences, they are less likely to report crimes, cooperate with investigations, seek medical care, enroll their children in school, or access public services. This erosion of trust harms not only immigrant communities, but the safety and well-being of all Maryland residents.

HB 444 helps ensure that state and local resources are used for their intended purpose: serving the public, promoting safety, and upholding the dignity of all who live in Maryland. By establishing clear, statewide standards, this bill promotes consistency, accountability, and effective governance across jurisdictions.

For these reasons, Indivisible Baltimore County strongly supports HB 444 and respectfully urges the Committee to issue a **favorable report without amendment**.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and leadership.

Jennifer Blalock

Steering Committee, Indivisible Baltimore County

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