



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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HB 0630 Correctional Services-Immigration Detention Facilities-Original Design and Construction
Judiciary Committee, March 11, 2026
SUPPORT

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2026 legislative session. Founded in 1956, WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials. WDC is known for its advocacy for law and policy to improve the lives of women and their families.

WDC urges swift passage of **HB 0630 Correctional Services-Immigration Detention Facilities-Original Design and Construction**. We support legislation that prevents the development of new immigrant detention centers in any county or municipality in Maryland. Currently, there are no fully operational, long-term federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers in Maryland. ICE uses local jails to hold detained individuals and operates short-term holding facilities in Salisbury and Baltimore. The Baltimore facility is reported to detain individuals in [inhuman conditions](#).

Recently, the federal government purchased a warehouse in Hagerstown, Maryland to convert into a long-term detention facility. Bill HB0630 would block the operation of a detention center in a building or structure that was not originally designed and constructed for the purpose of housing or detaining individuals as "generally relating to immigration detention." The prohibition of turning a building into a long-term holding facility for ICE when it was not constructed for that purpose is one of two approaches Maryland has used to stop building long term detention facilities in the state. The second approach was applied in Howard County, Maryland, in response to a plan by ICE to retrofit an ElkrIDGE office building as an ICE facility. In response to that plan, [the County Council passed emergency legislation that prevents privately-owned buildings from being used as a detention center](#).

Other states and jurisdictions have taken analogous steps to either block or stop expansion of ICE detention facilities by regulating where and how such facilities can be created. Specifically, the New Mexico Immigrant Safety Act (2026) effectively [prevents public facilities from being repurposed for immigration detention](#). Additionally, Kansas City, Missouri, passed a resolution in January 2026 that [prohibited construction of immigration detention facilities in the city for five years](#). We acknowledge that [the supremacy clause of the US constitution may ultimately be used to try to nullify HB 0630](#) and similar acts by other localities. Nevertheless, we feel strongly that such attempts to block construction of detention centers are worthy and reflect the values of the WDC. These laws, resolutions, and bills are tests of whether unwanted privately-run prisons are to be allowed in a city, county, or state's backyard.

Immigrants constitute 16.7% of Maryland's total population, with the highest concentrations in Montgomery County (32.5%), Prince George's County (22.5%), and Howard County (20.9%). In our home of Montgomery County, immigrants [drive economic growth and contribute significantly to tax revenues](#). The Montgomery County WDC supports HB 0630 and all efforts to prevent the development of new immigrant detention centers in any county or municipality in Maryland.

WDC applauds the sponsors of HB 0630. We ask for your support for HB 0630 and strongly urge swift passage.

Cynthia Rubenstein
WDC President

Alison O'Brien
WDC Immigration Subcommittee

Kate Stein
WDC Advocacy Chair