

To enter into an immigration enforcement agreement at this juncture is to give this petty, vindictive, and capricious administration the opportunity to respond to any actions Maryland and its representatives take that politically or personally offend the president by sending in ill-trained, bigotry-driven thugs as instruments of terror. ICE is not making anyone safer; it is assaulting, kidnapping, torturing, and killing people with impunity. The hell it is inflicting on beloved members of our community would be unacceptable under any circumstances, and ICE's stated goals – to enforce the law, to protect Americans, to maintain the integrity of our immigration system – are a clear and obvious pretext for reveling in unchecked violence. The fact is, our neighbors aren't being stolen and brutalized because it makes us safer; it's happening because our leaders enjoy watching it happen. Maryland does not have to engage willingly with this depravity. Pass HB0444 to protect the integrity of our governance and, more importantly, to protect the immigrant, Black, brown, and indigenous Marylanders who do, and will, bear the brunt of ICE's obscene crusade.