

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable
HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 26, 2026

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

My name is Andy Solages, and I live in Frederick, Maryland. I am writing in support of **HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

I support **HB 444** because immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) create fear, danger, and harm in our communities. Immigrants and their families experience the most fear and danger, but 287(g) harms more than the most vulnerable.

The public conversation about immigration and inhumane attacks on migrants and our communities is poisoned with lies and propaganda about migrants committing crimes, and racist gibberish like “Haitians are stealing and eating pets.” So, in case someone reading my testimony has a mind clouded with that nonsense, I’ll speak to my experience as a natural-born citizen, taxpayer, and “hard-working American” before returning to the immigrants we should center here.

I am furious that my children (who are citizens) asked me whether ICE might kidnap them or me based on our appearance. And because of 287(g), the question wasn’t just about “ICE” proper but included our city police and sheriff’s department. I can’t hide ICE’s inhumanity and the racial implications from my older child, so any relationship between ICE and local law enforcement forces tough conversations that start with fear.

I have no interest in patronizing responses telling me how 287(g) agreements work. I know how they’re “supposed” to work. But I’m testifying about the real-life impact and fear that makes the “on-paper” spin irrelevant.

In our community, I’ve heard stories of families separated and harmed after contact with law enforcement involving minor legal issues and frivolous pretexts. This includes a recent conversation with a citizen who is afraid to drive her car to work after her immigrant husband (who entered this country legally) was taken from her. As I started writing this testimony, a friend (a citizen) described her recent experience comforting a weeping child whose loved ones were snatched away. The child stayed in her arms for 20 minutes and asked my friend if she “would protect her.” My neighbors speak of their sorrow and fear, and if we’re human, we should hear them and act.

This is a time for courage and clarity. This is not the time for complicity and purposely fuzzy thinking, like when ICE enablers conflate immigrants who have not been convicted of violent

crimes with the outliers who have been. All of us know better. Let's skip the fake migrant crime narratives and be serious.

287(g) agreements undermine public safety for everyone. When people fear contact with law enforcement, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate as witnesses—even when they are victims. No one who cares about public safety should support agreements that make law enforcement vehicles driving through neighborhoods feel like a cause for increased vigilance.

Programs like 287(g) have been associated with racial profiling (e.g., “Kavanaugh stops”), discrimination, and wrongful detention (e.g., ChongLy Scott Thao in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Kilmar Abrego Garcia in our state). They divert local resources away from protecting communities and instead entangle local agencies in federal deportation efforts that separate families and destabilize neighborhoods.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **HB 444**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.