

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 0630
Correctional Services – Immigration Detention Facilities – Original Design and Construction

House Judiciary Committee | March 11, 2026

Chair Bartlett and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express strong support of House Bill 0630, which would prohibit operating an immigration detention facility in any building not originally designed and constructed to house or detain individuals.

People should not be held in warehouses. The bill responds directly to the planned ICE detention facility in Williamsport — an 825,620-square-foot commercial warehouse with four toilets and two water fountains, intended to hold up to 1,500 people. No retrofit can substitute for a facility built from the ground up with adequate plumbing, ventilation, medical space, and emergency egress. HB 0630 draws a simple line: if a building was not built to hold people, it should not be used to hold people.

This bill does not set federal immigration policy. It regulates detention facilities operating within Maryland's borders — well within the General Assembly's authority. It also ensures that state and local governments cannot enter into or renew contracts with private operators that fail to meet this basic construction standard, and that communities receive proper notice before such facilities open nearby.

HB 0630 is a narrow, legally sound measure that protects detained individuals from dangerous conditions and limits Maryland's participation in substandard facilities. I urge a favorable vote.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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