



Center for Salud/Health and Opportunity for Latinos
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Center for Child and Community Health Research
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TO: Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair
Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair
House Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Centro SOL

DATE: March 9th, 2026

HB 0630

Favorable

RE: Centro SOL supports HB0630 - Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Original Design and Construction

Centro SOL is pleased to offer a **favorable testimony** in support of **HB0630 - Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Original Design and Construction**.

As an organization that works closely with Latino and immigrant communities across Maryland, Centro SOL (Center for Salud/Health and Opportunity for Latinos at Johns Hopkins) is committed to advancing health equity and improving access to healthcare. Through our Collaborative Action Network (CAN), we bring together healthcare providers, public health leaders, and community organizations to better understand barriers affecting access to care for underserved populations. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0630. *Note: This testimony does not necessarily represent the views of Johns Hopkins University.*

Through our work with Latino and immigrant families in Baltimore City and across Maryland, we regularly hear about the fear and uncertainty many families are experiencing related to immigration enforcement. Community members often share concerns about the conditions individuals may face once in custody.

Across the United States, similar concerns have been raised about the conditions within immigration detention facilities. Many of these facilities operate in buildings that were never designed to house people safely or humanely. Repurposed jails, warehouses, and other makeshift facilities may lack adequate medical infrastructure, sanitation systems, ventilation, and safe living conditions. As a result, these environments raise serious concerns about the health, dignity, and well-being of individuals held in custody.



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Additionally, immigration detention frequently affects individuals who have already experienced trauma, displacement, and prolonged uncertainty. When detention occurs in facilities that are not designed to safely house individuals, the risks of overcrowding, delayed access to medical care, infectious disease transmission, and worsening mental health outcomes can increase significantly.

For this reason, policies that establish clear standards for detention facilities can help protect the health and safety of individuals in custody while also promoting greater accountability and oversight. Ensuring that detention facilities are purpose-built helps support appropriate infrastructure for housing individuals, including access to medical care, sanitation, and safe living environments.

HB0630 takes an important step toward addressing these concerns by prohibiting the operation of immigration detention facilities in buildings that were not originally designed and constructed for detention purposes.

Centro SOL supports HB0630 because it will:

1. **Promote Safe and Appropriate Facility Standards:** Purpose-built detention facilities are better equipped to meet basic infrastructure requirements for housing individuals safely.
2. **Protect Health and Well-Being:** Facilities designed for detention are more likely to provide appropriate access to sanitation, ventilation, and medical care.
3. **Support Healthier Communities:** Policies that promote safe and humane conditions help strengthen trust between immigrant communities and public institutions.

Centro SOL urges the committee to provide a **favorable report on HB0630**. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director, Centro SOL

Sarah Polk, MD, ScM
Co-Director, Centro SOL
Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins
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