



TESTIMONY - FAVORABLE

HB444 Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement Agreements - Prohibition

TO: House Judiciary Committee

FROM: The Rev. Steve Holt, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN)

DATE: January 27, 2026

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

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network offers favorable testimony in support of HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition. Our congregations serve people throughout Maryland, including immigrant communities who have been directly affected by the current administration’s punitive and lawless approach to enforcement.

HB 444 is about affirming what our churches teach about respecting the dignity and worth of every human being, and welcoming the stranger among us. This bill seeks to ensure that our state is not in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or diverting state and local resources into federal immigration enforcement. We believe Maryland should remain focused on community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law by prohibiting immigration enforcement agreements such as 287(g).

The 287(g) program has a documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. It diverts local law enforcement away from their primary role of protecting public safety and erodes trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities. When trust is broken, community safety suffers.

For these reasons, the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network urges the House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 444.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) is a ministry of The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and The Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA