

Testimony on House Bill 444 – Favorable
HB444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition
House Judiciary Committee
January 27, 2026

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

My name is Michelle Koul, and I am a constituent of District 31. I am writing **in support of HB444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

In 2017, the importance of local politics as a means to protect us from federal chaos became clear. Along the way I learned about the 287g program and read up on this program's impact on communities. At a meet-and-greet, I tried to tell my then delegate (Sid Saab) about a report from UNC about the negative impact of this program. I quickly realized how little he knew! Therefore, I thought I might provide a summary of the impacts of the 287g programs that have been enacted elsewhere:

- **Erosion of Trust:** The program's broad reach led to immigrant communities fearing police, making them hesitant to report crimes like domestic violence or exploitation, harming overall public safety, notes the [ACLU of North Carolina](#).
- **No Crime Reduction Link:** Research from the [Cato Institute](#) and [Latino Migration Project](#) found no causal link between 287(g) apprehensions and lower crime rates, with some counties seeing crime drop as immigration rose.
- **Misaligned Focus:** Studies, including those from UNC and the ACLU, found 287(g) often targeted minor offenses like traffic violations (driving without a license) rather than violent criminals, contrary to program goals.
- **Increased Officer Assaults:** A potential unintended consequence noted by the Cato Institute was a significant rise in assaults against police officers in areas with 287(g) agreements.
- **High Local Costs:** Localities, like Mecklenburg County, incurred millions in costs for jail space and resources, diverting funds from other priorities like police cameras, as detailed in a report by [Popular Democracy](#).
- **Lack of Oversight:** Federal reports (GAO, OIG) found ICE lacked sufficient training, supervision, and performance metrics for the program, hindering accountability.
[[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#)]

I was glad to see 287g eliminated in Anne Arundel County - I am not afraid of my own police. ICE has its place - but what is happening now is insane, and our local police should not be a part of it. I am the daughter of a retired NYPD Sergeant and it pains me to see my father's anguish at the harm ICE is doing to the reputation of all law enforcement. Please issue a **favorable report on HB444** and keep our local law enforcement out of the mess this administration has created.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Dr. Michelle Koul (she/her)
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