

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

My name is Stephanie and I'm a resident of Owings Mills, MD. I also work with a Homeless Outreach Program in Baltimore County. Several of the people I serve are immigrants. I am writing in support of **HB 444 Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**. I'm writing to speak up for my friends, neighbors, coworkers, strangers, and all of my compañeros. I am writing because I'm sick of wondering where our clients might be when they don't show up for several weeks, not knowing whether that person has been targeted or arrested for the non-crime of being an immigrant and experiencing homelessness.

287G agreements are not about crime or safety. How can something that prevents people from seeking out law enforcement due to fear help make people safer? They make communities less safe by discouraging citizens and non-citizens alike from reporting crimes or coming forward as witnesses, even if they are the victims of the crime. These agreements are about bigotry and power. They are about concentrating all forces to target the most vulnerable in our society. Even though a clean criminal record shouldn't be a condition of staying in this country (if that were true, you'd have to deport me), the vast majority of those targeted have NO criminal record, despite what Noem and the rest of MAGA continues to erroneously claim with their baseless fear-mongering. Maryland should NOT stand with them and contribute to the ongoing and, frankly, terrifying white supremacist takeover of our once-welcoming country.

As a queer, nonbinary, trans person, I've experienced first-hand how this administration has targeted and tried to erase my rights and personhood. The Supreme Court recently heard arguments over whether trans people, INCLUDING KIDS, should be able to play sports. KIDS. Our country is fighting over whether KIDS should be able to enjoy the basic freedoms provided at schools, all because of the hateful culture wars and absolute lies that are spouted by this increasingly cult-like administration. I won't stand for these bigoted attacks against people like myself and our rights or against any other person's basic humanity. That is why I'm writing today.

If ICE and the rest of MAGA continues unchecked, treating immigrants, minorities, and people experiencing homelessness like they are worth less than the dirt beneath their feet, there will be more names added to the ever-growing list that includes, among dozens of others, Carlos Roberto Montoya, Keith Porter Jr., and Renee Nicole Good. This isn't about right or left. It's about RIGHT and WRONG. It's about basic morality. If the very first state in this country can recognize these agreements as wrong, then Maryland should stand with them and set an example for the rest of the country in the fight for immigrants' rights and basic humanity. Let's show the rest of the country exactly what values and rights we hold dear. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 444.

Thank you for your time and consideration.