

Testimony on House Bill HB 444

Favorable

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

My name is Julia Nichols, and I am a resident of St. Mary's County. I am writing in support of HB 444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition.

I support HB 444 because immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) create fear in immigrant communities and undermine public safety for everyone. When people fear contact with law enforcement, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate as witnesses—even when they are victims.

Programs like 287(g) have been associated with racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. They divert local resources away from protecting communities and instead entangle local agencies in federal deportation efforts that separate families and destabilize neighborhoods.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 444.

Thank you for your time and consideration.