

TO: Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Anne L. Garrett

My name is Anne Garrett, and I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0630, Prohibiting the operation of an immigration detention facility at a building, structure, or facility that was not originally designed and constructed for the purpose of housing or detaining individuals.

I am very concerned about the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) retrofitting warehouses for the use of detaining individuals. Warehouses are not built for housing people. I know from my former company's warehouses, which stored publications and conference materials, that the floors are hard, the ceilings are high, and the lighting was dim. The facility was much too hot in the summer, and very cold in the winter. Such conditions were fine for storing many types of objects. Such conditions are totally inappropriate for housing people. In DHS' rush to convert warehouses into human detention centers, I believe, based on newspaper reports of the horrifying, overcrowded, inhumane conditions at such facilities, that DHS is immune to basic humanitarian concerns about treating people with respect, care, and dignity.

I believe DHS rushed to acquire the Williamsport, Maryland, warehouse and did not allow for public input about the purchase. I learned from U.S. Congressman Steny Hoyer that on February 27, 2026, DHS published an "Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100- to 500-Year Floodplain," with its proposal to acquire and retrofit the warehouse in Williamsport. However, this notice was made 6 weeks after DHS had purchased the warehouse.

In addition, DHS opened a brief 5-day window for public comment earlier this month, and I was able to submit comments. But a 30-day comment period is standard. Again, this demonstrates a desire on the part of DHS to rush through the process of setting up an ICE detention center in Maryland and to do it without transparency. Who knows what we can expect when they then rush through the steps of retrofitting this facility for human habitation.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0630. Thank you.