



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,

Advance Maryland supports the passage of HB444, prohibiting 287(g) agreements in Maryland. This bill is about upholding Maryland's core values—fairness, dignity, and justice for all—while promoting real public safety. HB444 affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining community trust, or diverting state and local resources into federal immigration enforcement. Instead, Maryland should remain focused on keeping communities safe, respecting due process, and ensuring equal treatment under the law.

Immigration enforcement agreements like 287(g) blur the line between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities. As a result, they create fear in immigrant communities and make all of us less safe. When residents fear that contact with local police could lead to detention or deportation, they are far less likely to report crimes, seek emergency assistance, or cooperate with law enforcement as witnesses. Survivors of domestic violence, workers facing exploitation, and victims of serious crimes are often pushed into silence. This erosion of trust undermines the ability of law enforcement to do its job effectively and weakens community safety statewide.

Programs like 287(g) have also been linked to racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detention. By encouraging local agencies to engage in immigration enforcement, these agreements increase the risk that people will be targeted based on race, ethnicity, or perceived immigration status rather than actual criminal behavior. This is inconsistent with Maryland's commitment to equal protection and due process under the law.

In addition, 287(g) agreements represent a poor use of limited state and local resources. They require training, staffing, and administrative capacity that would be far better spent on addressing serious crime, preventing violence, and supporting community-based public safety strategies. Federal immigration enforcement is the responsibility of the federal government, not local jurisdictions. Maryland taxpayers should not be subsidizing policies that do not make our communities safer and that actively destabilize families and neighborhoods.

HB444 makes clear that Maryland is committed to policies that strengthen trust between residents and local institutions. Ending 287(g) agreements allows law enforcement to focus on their core mission and reassures communities that seeking help will not put their families at risk. This clarity benefits everyone who lives and works in Maryland.

For these reasons, Advance Maryland respectfully urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on HB444 and take an important step toward a safer, fairer Maryland for all.