

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 **Nicole Meoli**, and I am a **resident of Queen Anne's County, Maryland**. I am writing in support of **HB444 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement Agreements – Prohibition**.

I care about this bill because our country was built on the backs of immigrants—my own family included—and I believe my immigrant neighbors are entitled to the same safe, fair, and legal treatment as those of us who have birthright citizenship.

I support **HB444** 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.

Along with other residents of Queen Anne's County, I have recently attempted to assist those in our immigrant community who are eligible to prepare for becoming U.S. citizens. Unfortunately, we have been unable to break through the fear these individuals have that participating in such programs jeopardize their personal safety and the safety and wellbeing of their families.

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.

Prohibiting these agreements would improve safety, trust, and fairness across the Eastern Shore and wider Maryland communities. That's all anyone wants and everyone deserves. In addition, I do not believe that our county resources (federal taxpayer dollars) should be diverted to “federal efforts” that are already funded at a level that makes them the thirteenth largest military in the world (despite not being military).

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Meoli
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