

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building
Room 101
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support for House Bill 1575 Correctional Services and Public Safety Immigration Enforcement Prohibitions Community Trust Act

Dear Chair Clippinger,

Maryland Latinos Unidos respectfully supports House Bill 1575, the Community Trust Act. House Bill 1575 would prohibit employees and agents of state and local correctional facilities from taking specified actions related to immigration enforcement, with defined exceptions, and would establish guardrails that keep Maryland public safety systems focused on their intended role.

These protections matter for Maryland's Latino and immigrant communities because entanglement between correctional systems and immigration enforcement drives fear, destabilizes families, and weakens public safety. Maryland is home to a large Latino population, including many immigrants who contribute to the state's workforce, schools, and local economies. When correctional systems are perceived as a pathway into immigration enforcement, people do not only fear arrest. They fear calling 911, seeking protection orders, reporting workplace crimes, or appearing in court to defend their rights.

Multiple studies have documented that fear of immigration enforcement reduces engagement with law enforcement and public systems, including reduced reporting of crimes in immigrant communities. That dynamic increases impunity for perpetrators and undermines community safety.

House Bill 1575 strengthens trust. It helps ensure that local correctional and public safety functions do not become an extension of federal immigration enforcement, and it supports a Maryland where due process and public safety are not conditioned on immigration status. In community terms, that means parents are more likely to seek help when a child is threatened, workers are more likely to report exploitation, and survivors of violence are more likely to pursue legal protection without fear of triggering immigration consequences.

Implications for Maryland Latinos Unidos and the communities we serve

This bill advances equity by protecting immigrant families from avoidable system contact that can lead to detention and separation. It expands the practical freedom to access courts, services, and safety without fear. It also supports local governments and agencies by clarifying roles,

reducing confusion, and improving community cooperation that is essential for effective public safety.

Maryland Latinos Unidos can assist by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate education on what the Community Trust Act means for residents, and by working with partners to monitor implementation so the protections are applied consistently. We can also support referral pathways so families impacted by enforcement threats can connect quickly with legal services and community resources.

For these reasons, Maryland Latinos Unidos respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 1575.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.
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