



Testimony on House Bill 1575– Favorable

HB1575 – Correctional Services and Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement - Prohibitions (Community Trust Act)

Judiciary Committee

February 23, 2026

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

Indivisible Baltimore City offers favorable testimony in support of **HB1575 – the Community Trust Act**.

Indivisible Baltimore City is a diverse community organization with over 2,000 members committed to defending American democracy, liberty, justice, and the rule of law, both here in Baltimore and nationwide. We work to increase participation in the electoral process, hold our leaders accountable for defending and strengthening democracy, to protect the most vulnerable members of our community, and to build a thriving society by bridging racial, religious, socioeconomic, and political divides. We pursue these goals through a wide range of non-violent, proactive approaches that empower individuals and strengthen our community.

Although we congratulate the Maryland Legislature for passing the bill banning 287(g) agreements, there exist loopholes which must be filled if the intent behind HB444/SB245 is to be realized.

Sheriffs in 9 Maryland counties are likely to continue to act as partners to ICE in immigration enforcement beyond that necessary to detain and deport convicted violent offenders who are in the U.S. illegally. In fact, Frederick County Sheriff Jenkins and Carroll County Sheriff DeWees said as much in an article in the online publication [Police1](#). Jenkins and Sheriff Gahler of Harford County will provide arrest sheets to ICE every day so they can do checks. They also plan to continue immigration detainers, which allow local jurisdictions to hold people suspected of immigrating illegally for up to 48 hours.

Some sheriffs – including those mentioned in this testimony – are members of the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA) whose members believe that, because the role of sheriff existed prior to the drafting of the U.S. Constitution, they are not subject to its provisions and that they can determine what is constitutional and what is not within their jurisdictions. It is time Maryland comes to terms with the anti-governmental philosophy of this organization just as conservative state Arizona did in prosecuting Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio – a prominent member of CSPOA. For more information on the CSPOA, see the Background section of this [SPLC article](#).

You are, no doubt, aware of the racial profiling that occurs in some of the 9 counties where 287(g) agreements have been in place with people being arrested for minor – or phantom – traffic violations, for example, and then turned over to ICE. This must stop.

When local law enforcement is seen to be a local arm of federal immigration enforcement, many of our law-abiding immigrant neighbors will live in fear, compromising their ability to care for their families and to make the contributions to Maryland society that make our state strong. They will continue to fear contacting police when they witness a crime or, worse, when they are victims of crime.

While the bill prevents local law enforcement (LE) from taking unreasonable measures in investigating the immigration status, birthplace, or citizenship of a detained individual and prevents LE from transferring an individual to federal immigration authorities unless presented with a valid judicial warrant, and other related provisions, it does not prevent a LE agent from inquiring about anything – including immigration status – if it is material to a criminal investigation. Arguments that the bill would cause the release of known, violent criminals from local incarceration are unfounded.

For these reasons, **Indivisible Baltimore City** urges the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB1575**.

Sincerely,

Ben Cruz, Co-Lead, Immigration Working Group, Indivisible Baltimore City