

TESTIMONY FOR HB0309
Judicial Facilities - Stops, Detentions, and Arrests - Limitations
February 2, 2026

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Stewart

Committee: Judiciary

Person Submitting: Valerie Fears, Maryland resident

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

As a concerned Maryland resident, I submit this testimony in favor of HB0309 and against the January 21, 2025 Trump administration's Immigration and Customs Enforcement directive allowing (therefore encouraging) ICE agents to make immigration arrests at courthouses. As you know, this has become a major problem throughout the U.S. since Trump's second term began.

Immigrants are required to regularly attend court hearings or check-ins with local officials. The administration's unfair and cruel directive has forced immigrants to choose between trying to attend their mandatory hearings and check-ins or face the very real possibility of being grabbed, sent to a detention center or deported, all without due process.

HB0309 will prohibit any "person" (including immigration or other law enforcement agents) from stopping, detaining or arresting an individual for certain civil offenses while the individual is in a "judicial facility" or is traveling within one mile of it. Exceptions state clearly under which circumstances the prohibitions in this bill do not apply as well as providing clear and detailed definitions of the terms "person" and "judicial facility."

For all of the above reasons, and in support of additional details provided in the bill's Fiscal and Policy Note, I urge you to vote in favor of this bill.