

January 23, 2026

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Distinguished Committee Members,

My name is Brandon Russell and I am a resident of St. Mary's County. I'm writing in support of House Bill 444 - Prohibition of Immigration Enforcement Agreements, and urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on this legislation.

St. Mary's County is one of several in Maryland where the Sheriff has entered into what's known as a "287(g)" agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. I have read the agreement and it is incredibly one-sided, placing the burden of execution and related costs solely on local law enforcement. This further strains their ability to protect our communities by stretching already thin budgets and, most importantly, by creating distrust between local residents and the Sheriff's Office.

We cannot expect to keep our communities safe when distrust exists. Any law enforcement agency that knowingly engages in these agreements despite the clearly unconstitutional actions of ICE is doing so at the detriment of Marylanders they serve and protect.

Again, I urge a **favorable report** from the committee on House Bill 444.

Thank you,

Brandon Russell
Leonardtown, MD
brandon4stmarys@gmail.com