

HB0444 ~ Favorable
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To Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the committee,

ICE makes agreements with counties on a very frequent basis. As of now, according to the Department of Homeland Security, they have stricken more than 1000 agreements with counties and states. This includes many of Maryland's counties.

These agreements, particularly the 287g agreements, are considerably harmful across the state in a variety of ways. While the county I reside in, Baltimore County, has not yet implemented such an agreement, they do have a memorandum of understanding and the prospect of a larger 287g agreement has worried me and my peers significantly.

The tactics used by ICE are often corrupt or morally dubious at the very least. They often use face masks to conceal their identity and are known to lie frequently simply to meet quotas, utilizing administrative warrants extensively to hunt down individuals and detain them. They are also notorious for their racial profiling of Latinos. As a Latino Student myself, despite being an American born citizen, I feel some fear that ICE may profile and detain me. This fear is generally held the same around my community. This has been heightened recently as, per NBC, 11 people have been shot during immigration enforcement operations since September alone.

287g agreements also have a profound fiscal impact. ICE uses local law enforcement and their holding facilities in 287g agreements to assist in immigration enforcement. These facilities and officers should remain the responsibility of the DHS. Relying on our local law enforcement funding for officer training, overtime and other administrative duties, in which localities often take the burden of ICE salaries, puts significant strain on local budgets, often outweighing any federal funding. This is felt greatly in Maryland with our significant budget shortfall this session.

Perhaps worst of all, these agreements do not work. Frederick County, which has a 287g agreement, has a crime rate 14% higher than Montgomery County which has no 287g agreements and, according to the DLS, has the highest immigrant population of any county in Maryland. This is thanks to several factors. While ICE was initially established to deport criminals, more than 70% of ICE detainees were detained on civil charges. Furthermore, only 5% had a violent criminal conviction. Furthermore, in detention facilities in 2025, 32 individuals died in ICE custody, with at least another 4 since the start of 2026 alone. Their facilities are often cited as inhumane. Regardless, having 287g agreements clearly distracts Maryland law enforcement from stopping the crime that really matters, defeating the whole purpose of the agreements and worsening community trust with law enforcement.

From inhumane facilities to crippling fiscal impacts, 287g agreements and all other agreements with ICE are considerably harmful to Marylanders, eroding community trust with law enforcement and preventing local police from doing their duties and keeping Maryland safe. This bill, HB0444, saves our community, our law enforcement and our budget by getting rid of these awful agreements. In the interests and values of all Maryland, I ask that the committee vote favorably on HB0444 and end ICE agreements throughout the state of Maryland.