

Testimony to the House of Delegates Judiciary Committee
HB 675: Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement - Immigration Enforcement Agreements
Position: Unfavorable

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Sandy Bartlett, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
100 State Circle, State House
Annapolis, MD 21401
cc: Members, Judiciary Committee

Chair Bartlett and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jordy Diaz and I am a resident of Legislative District 16. As the son of Honduran immigrants I understand how state power is weaponized against marginalized communities. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB 675. This bill is a dangerous unfunded mandate that forces Maryland taxpayers to subsidize federal overreach.

The sponsors of this legislation frequently build their political identities around the concepts of local control and fiscal responsibility. HB 675 exposes that political philosophy as a complete fraud. This bill legally forces local jurisdictions to act as a subordinate branch of a federal deportation apparatus. Mandating that county facilities detain individuals for up to 48 hours without a judicial warrant is a total surrender of state sovereignty. It represents the exact type of centralized government overreach that these sponsors pretend to oppose.

The mechanical absurdity of this legislation is fully exposed in its penalty clause. If a local agency releases an individual instead of holding them for federal agents, this bill dictates that the local agency must pay all housing and court costs if that person is arrested anywhere else in the country within the next five years. That is an infinite fiscal black hole and an impossible administrative tracking burden. It proves the sponsors are fundamentally unserious about fiscal responsibility. The Department of Legislative Services fiscal note confirms this bill will drain local resources for legal fees and facility space. Forcing Maryland counties to underwrite the incarceration costs for the entire country is absolute legislative malpractice.

History provides a clear structural warning about forcing local governments to execute federal mandates against marginalized groups. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 forced state and local officials to execute federal warrants and detain individuals stripped of their legal rights. That mandate weaponized local resources to serve a federal agenda of cruelty and destroyed the administrative autonomy of the states that complied. HB 675 attempts to build the exact same mechanical trap for Maryland today.

We must reject this attempt to turn our local law enforcement into a shadow extension of federal operations. Protecting local autonomy means refusing to absorb the financial and moral liability of a broken federal system. I urge the committee to protect Maryland taxpayers and issue an unfavorable report on HB 675.

Sincerely,

Jordy Diaz

