

## House Bill 832

My name is Mohamed Alghali. I am a resident of Bowie, Maryland, and I am here today to express my strong support for House Bill 832, the ICE Breaker Act. This legislation would prohibit Maryland state law enforcement agencies from hiring individuals who joined United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement as sworn officers on or after January 20, 2025. It is an important step toward accountability, compassion, and ensuring that our state reflects the values of dignity and humanity that Maryland prides itself on.

My support for this bill is deeply personal. My mother, Rabbiatu Kuyateh, is a nurse who dedicated her life to caring for others in this country. She has lived in Maryland for more than 30 years after fleeing the civil war in Sierra Leone in search of safety and stability. Like so many immigrants, she worked hard, raised a family here, and contributed to the community that she loved.

Last year, during what was supposed to be a routine ICE check in, my mother was unexpectedly detained. She went to that appointment the same way she had many times before, believing she would simply check in and return home to her family and her patients. Instead, she was taken into custody without warning.

After being detained, she was transferred far away from her family to a detention facility in Monroe, Louisiana. Being moved so far from home made it incredibly difficult for us to support her, communicate with her, or even understand what was happening in real time.

What followed was devastating for our family. My mother, a nurse and a grandmother who has spent her life caring for others, was later placed in shackles and put on a long international flight out of the country she had called home for three decades. She was deported in a way that caused immense emotional pain not only for her, but for our entire family. The story received international attention, but for us it was not just a headline. It was our mother being taken from us.

My mother is someone who spent her life healing people. She worked long hours as a nurse, helping patients through some of the most difficult moments of their lives. To see someone who dedicated herself to caring for others treated this way was heartbreaking and difficult to understand.

This experience has changed our family forever. But it has also strengthened our determination to speak out so that fewer families have to go through what we did. Policies and systems have real human consequences. Behind every case file is a family, children, and a community that feels the loss.

House Bill 832 sends an important message that Maryland believes in accountability and in protecting the humanity of the people who live here. It ensures that our state does not reward or absorb individuals who chose to join an enforcement system that has caused so much harm to families like mine.

My mother's story is painful, but it is also a reminder of why change is necessary. I hope that by sharing her story today, we can move toward a future where compassion, fairness, and dignity guide our policies.

I urge you to pass House Bill 832.