



Testimony in support of HB388 - 2020
Criminal Procedure - Civil Immigration Enforcement – Restrictions

To: Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair, and members of the House Judiciary Committee
From: Jerry Kickenson and David Conrad, Congregation Action Network
Date: February 11, 2020

We are writing in **support of House Bill 388**, Criminal Procedure - Civil Immigration Enforcement – Restrictions, on behalf of the Congregation Action Network. The Congregation Action Network is a network of faith communities in Washington, DC, and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs acting in solidarity to end detention, deportation, profiling, and criminalization of immigrants and demanding and upholding justice, dignity, safety, and family unity. With over 75 congregations and a thousand members throughout the capital area, including over 25 congregations and 300 members in Montgomery and Prince Georges counties, we live our faith in advocacy for our immigrant neighbors.

Our sacred texts and traditions teach us to welcome the stranger and love our neighbors as ourselves.

HB388 would prohibit police from inquiring about immigration status during stops or any interaction with the public, and prohibit any cooperation with federal immigration authorities unless otherwise required by law. A clear policy like this will increase trust in Maryland's immigrant community, leading to better reporting of crime and making us all safer. In our communities, residents have hesitated to report crimes, including theft and even rape, because they or a family member were undocumented, and they feared any interaction with local police. I want all Maryland residents to feel safe and not hesitate to aid police in preventing and solving crimes. Our local and state police have enough to do keeping Maryland safe without adding enforcement of federal immigration law.

Studies have repeatedly shown that immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, commit less crime than native born citizens. Studies have also shown that jurisdictions with policies and laws like HB388 have lower crime rates than those without.

We strongly urge you to reach a favorable report for HB388. It will increase all Maryland residents' trust in police, making us all safer. It is the moral and right thing to do.

Respectfully yours,
Jerry Kickenson
Cluster Lead, Congregation Action Network (Montgomery County)
Martha Wells
Cluster Lead, Congregation Action Network (Prince Georges County)