



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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Deni L. Taveras

Council Member, District 2

February 11, 2020

Hon. Luke H. Clippinger, District 46
Chair, Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
House Office Building, Room 101
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I urge you to support House Bill 403, Immigration Enforcement – Public Schools, Hospitals, and Courthouses – Policies, which will require the Attorney General to develop guidelines that will help public schools, hospitals, and courthouses develop policies that limit civil immigration enforcement on their premises.

Access to education, justice, and healthcare are the foundations of a healthy and thriving society. I can attest to their importance as the representative of one of our state's most vibrant immigrant communities, the Northern Gateway in Prince George's County. Since I was elected in 2014, I have worked tirelessly with school leadership to engage immigrant parents in our public schools and encourage them to advocate for the funding necessary to relieve overcrowding and fulfill the needs of their children. The barriers to involvement are high for these parents, and without the assurance that HB 403 would provide these families, much of our work could be undone in a moment.

We are lucky to have health providers who provide culturally sensitive and affordable preventative care to the Northern Gateway community, such as La Clinica del Pueblo and Mary's Center. But this care is severely limited if my constituents avoid visiting hospitals to receive treatment for more urgent or severe medical needs due to the fear of deportation.

Finally, in Prince George's County, and I am sure all across the state, our courthouses see the most vulnerable members of the undocumented community—those who are the victims of crime, including those who have been trafficked or suffered domestic violence. Without policies to limit civil immigration enforcement on the premises of courthouses, we will be even less likely to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice and ensure the safety of our communities. Moreover, I find it utterly unacceptable to risk revictimizing those who seek justice in our courthouses.

Thank you for considering these comments and I again urge you to support HB 403.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deni Taveras".

Hon. Deni Taveras
Prince George's County Council, District 2