

Amy Waychoff  
HB 403  
Opposed

My name is Amy Waychoff and I have lived in Montgomery County, MD, for over 32 years. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am strongly opposed to all bills that would turn Maryland into a Sanctuary State. HB 403 is but one example. One of the worst outcomes from sanctuary policies is the increase in gang activity in sanctuary jurisdictions. And I think we can all agree that the MS-13 transnational gang is the worst of the worst: its members commit unusually brutal crimes and it focuses recruitment on young members, often in schools. This gang is currently experiencing a resurgence in Maryland, arguably second only to California in terms of crimes committed by MS-13 members. A large portion of MS-13 members are illegal aliens who can and should be deported. But thanks to the Obama administration, ICE officers were told not to remove foreign gang members until they had been convicted of major crimes. At the same time, there was an influx of UACs, or Unaccompanied Alien Children, into the country. Most of these children were males between the ages of 13 and 17, prime targets for MS-13 recruitment. In fact, “30 percent of the MS-13 members that ICE has arrested in recent years are UACs.”\*

These policies set up a perfect storm for three well-known sanctuary jurisdictions in Maryland. According to ICE statistics, over a nine-month period in FY 2017, ten illegal alien MS-13 members were released by local Maryland jurisdictions instead of transferred to ICE custody: five in Montgomery County, four in Prince George's, and one in Baltimore City.\*\* Two vicious crimes by MS-13 in my local community highlight how misguided these sanctuary policies are. On August 1, 2017, five members of MS-13, including at least two who were confirmed as illegal aliens, beat a 15-year-old with a bat 28 times. Apparently she was "not doing a good job as an MS-13 prostitute." Her injuries were so bad that her buttocks were "indented." This horrible crime occurred in the woods next to Albert Einstein High School, just over two miles from my home. Another horrendous crime occurred in 2017 in Wheaton Regional Park. I used to bring my children there to ride on the carousel and the miniature train. There, ten members of MS-13, led by a 19-year-old illegal alien, stabbed another Hispanic man over 100 times. The unidentified man was also decapitated and his heart was cut out. These stories of depravity are all too prevalent anywhere MS-13 is allowed to flourish. If we want to diminish the scourge of MS-13, we must enforce our immigration laws, rather than provide a sanctuary to criminal illegal aliens.

\*Jessica M. Vaughan, “MS-13 Resurgence: Immigration Enforcement Needed to Take Back Our Streets,” Center for Immigration Studies, February 21, 2018.

\*\*Jessica M. Vaughan and Preston Huennekens, “Dozens of Gang Members Released by Sanctuary Policies,” Center for Immigration Studies, April 17, 2018.