

Dismantling Racism Team  
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**HB 677 - SUPPORT  
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES - IMMIGRATION DETENTION -  
PROHIBITION (DIGNITY NOT DETENTION ACT)**

Judiciary Committee - February 25, 2020

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

We are a team of church members who lead the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick in actions that work to dismantle racism, white supremacy and other oppressions within our congregation and community. Over the past three years we have learned a great deal about the abusive nature of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). We have taken action to oppose our local sheriff's department contract (287g) with ICE. We have participated in meetings of the Frederick County Council, sharing testimony on the harmful practices that occur due to this contract. We support the bill's provision that will forbid local law enforcement agencies from entering into such contracts and from housing immigrant detainees.

From community groups and teachers we have learned of parents being deported after a minor traffic violation. This has caused much trauma to the children directly affected, and sparked fear among other children who wonder if a parent might be locked up or even taken out of the country at any time. Racial profiling has been another detrimental effect of local contracts with ICE, e.g. Santos v. Frederick County, Medrano v. Jenkins, again causing harm to anyone who doesn't 'look white' or has difficulty with English.

The mean-spirited practices of ICE have no place in our community. The failure of the federal government to pass humane immigration reform should not place such a burden on our immigrant neighbors and our communities at large.

We are aware that private prisons are not allowed to operate in Maryland. We agree – no one should make a profit from another human being's misery. Similarly, we oppose the building of any immigrant detention centers in Maryland.

**We urge a favorable report on HB 677.**