

Hearing Date: February 10, 2021
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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB478/HB16
Correctional Services - Immigration Detention - Prohibition
(Dignity Not Detention Act)

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Lauren Hatch Pokhrel, and I live in Worcester County, Maryland. As a transplant from PA, I moved to the county to pursue a graduate degree at Salisbury University and build a life with my husband and now two sons. As a citizen of the U.S. married into an immigrant family and previous employee of an organization that works with immigrant communities on the Eastern Shore, I have seen first-hand the abominable way immigrants are treated in this country too often.

Passing this bill is necessary and must be done urgently. As a resident of this county, I was disgusted to learn an ICE detention center existed in the area and worse, is being profited from. Dignity not Detention ensures ethical treatment to immigrants. The horrors that ICE has committed to children, families, and individuals is reprehensible. This area has a chance to make a positive step towards morality, towards justice, towards what is right for humanity and our country through this bill. It must be passed now.

I urge a favorable report on SB478.