



Testimony in Support of HB 1273/SB 599: Immigration Enforcement - County Boards of Education, Public Institutions of Higher Education, and Hospitals – Policies

To: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Jim Caldiero, Co-Chair, Immigration Task Force

Yesterday, I spoke with several parents of Hispanic/Latino students of Centennial High School in Ellicott City, Howard County. The school is noted as highly competitive, in an affluent neighborhood with only a small percentage of Latino students. These parents related to me that many Hispanic/Latino parents do not allow their children to take advantage of programs offered by the school, including free and reduced meals, because they fear that any involvement with the government could place them in jeopardy. At a meeting at St. John's Evangelical Roman Catholic Church in Columbia, a large Latino congregation, I heard stories about mothers afraid to take sick children to the hospital and, much worse, being turned away or reported to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Imagine sending a sick child to school where germs spread, leading to even more children becoming ill?

Although ICE promulgated a "sensitive locations" policy in 2011, reports abound of ICE agents ignoring this policy, for example, apprehending undocumented students on their way to school. The fear that current U.S. immigration policies have engendered in our community demands that your committee pass HB 1273/SB 599.

My Unitarian Universalist faith calls me to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to promote and affirm justice, equity and compassion in human relations. Removing the fear that is prevalent among some of our neighbors is not only demanded by my faith, but also makes sense. HB1273/SB599 will surely help to assuage the fear in our immigrant communities, allow students to take advantage of government-sponsored programs and ensure the public health of all Marylanders.

I urge you to pass HB1273/SB 599.

Thank you.

Jim Caldiero

Email: immigration@uulmmd.org

Sources:

ICE Apprehensions: <https://sojo.net/articles/ice-raids-near-sensitive-locations-stoke-fear-immigrant-communities>

ICE Ignores Policy: <https://pjmedia.com/news-and-politics/2017/03/31/dems-move-to-ban-ice-from-arresting-illegal-immigrants-in-sensitive-locations/>

ICE Raids Hospitals: <https://psmag.com/social-justice/ice-keeps-raiding-hospitals-and-harming-disabled-children>

ICE Raids in Maryland: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/ice-raids-under-trump-spark-fear-in-maryland-virginia/2017/02/17/01044db8-f517-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?utm_term=.b1d78797301e