

January 13, 2026

Carol Stern

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF EXPEDITED BILL 35-25
Promoting Community Trust - Immigrant Protections Act

TO: Council President Fani-González, Vice President Balcombe, and members of the County Council

FROM: Carol Stern

OPENING: My name is Carol Stern. I am a resident of Chevy Chase in County District One. I am submitting this testimony in support of Expedited Bill 35-25, Promoting Community Trust – Immigrant Protections Act.

I want to thank Council President Fani-González for her leadership on this legislation and thank the other Councilmembers for co-sponsoring this bill. As a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda, my values regarding immigration are deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition. My tradition teaches us to welcome the stranger, for we were strangers in the land of Egypt. Leviticus 19:34 explicitly instructs us to treat immigrants in our land the same as native citizens. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan wrote “teach us to respect the integrity of every human soul be it that of a friend or stranger, child or adult.” When we are working to reform our immigration justice system, we must demand that it operates in accordance with these deeply held Jewish beliefs.

My grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe and found a welcoming United States of America to build a family and fulfil their American dream. Every immigrant deserves that same opportunity. The Promoting Community Trust - Immigrant Protections Act will go along way to help protect our local immigrant community by ending local voluntary cooperation with ICE, restricting ICE access in sensitive locations in Montgomery County without a warrant, outlawing discrimination based on immigration status, stopping the use of Montgomery County resources to voluntarily assist ICE in separating immigrant families, and stopping the unnecessary collection of immigration status. We must have a county where our immigrant residents can feel safe enough to send their children to school, shop at the grocery store and go to work.

I urge the Council to pass Expedited Bill 35-25, Promoting Community Trust, quickly and without any weakening amendments.