



March 24, 2026

Testimony to the Montgomery County Council

RE: Expedited Bill 13-26, the ICE Out Act

Dear Council Members:

The League of Women Voters of Montgomery County (LWVMC) strongly urges the Montgomery County Council to pass Expedited Bill 13-26, the ICE Out Act. This bill would prohibit the Department of Permitting Services from issuing a building or a use-and-occupancy permit for a privately-owned detention facility. The intent of this bill is to prevent new and existing buildings to be used as privately-owned immigration detention facilities.

The League of Women Voters supports public policies that are grounded in due process, equal protection, and transparency in government.¹ The proposed ICE Out Act is consistent with these principles by ensuring that Montgomery County's permitting authority is not used to enable facilities that raise significant concerns about oversight and accountability.

The League's longstanding positions affirm that all persons are entitled to due process under the law.² Immigration detention—particularly in facilities that may lack sufficient transparency or local accountability—can create barriers to accessing legal representation and exercising fundamental rights. Policies that limit the expansion of such systems are consistent with the League's commitment to fair and equitable treatment.

The League also supports immigration policies that are humane and that minimize unnecessary detention, including the use of alternatives where appropriate.³ By preventing the establishment of new private detention facilities, the ICE Out Act aligns with this approach and reflects a preference for systems that prioritize dignity and accountability.

The League strongly believes that all persons have the right to humane treatment and is concerned that ICE has subjected immigrants to inhumane conditions in its facilities. According to major news outlets, conditions inside ICE detention facilities are unsanitary and unsafe.⁴ Detainees have reported sewage overflows, insects and contaminated food in some centers.⁵ Lawsuits and investigations allege inadequate medical care, abuse and neglect.⁶

Finally, League policy promotes the preservation of local governments' authority over zoning, permitting, and government contracting decisions to limit the conversion or construction of immigration detention facilities, including for those that do not meet community needs and humane

¹ League of Women Voters of the United States, *Impact on Issues*, "Individual Liberties," 2024–2026 edition.

² Ibid.

³ League of Women Voters of the United States, *Impact on Issues*, "Immigration," 2024–2026 edition.

⁴ PBS NewsHour segment (January 20, 2026).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Gomez Ruiz, et al. v. ICE, was filed in the U.S. District Court of Northern California November 12, 2025.



treatment standards.⁷

The League supports transparent, accountable government systems, particularly where individual liberty is at stake.⁸ The ICE Out Act is a proactive measure that ensures Montgomery County retains control over how its land-use authority is applied, while avoiding future conflicts over facilities that may not reflect community standards for oversight and fairness.

This bill underscores Montgomery County's authority over permitting to limit the conversion and construction of immigration detention facilities within the county. **Montgomery County must assert its authority to set standards and prevent the establishment of inhumane detention facilities.**

For these reasons, this legislation is consistent with League principles of good governance, individual rights, and public accountability.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our views and we urge the Council to pass Expedited Bill 13-26.

Joan Siegel
Vice President for Advocacy
League of Women Voters of Montgomery County

⁷ LWV Federal Immigration Enforcement Advocacy Action Kit, March 4, 2026.

⁸ League of Women Voters of the United States, *Impact on Issues*, "Administration of Justice," 2024–2026 edition.