

## **Testimony regarding Expedited Bill 35-25, County Administration - Immigrant Protections (Promoting Community Trust - Immigrant Protections Act)**

**Dr. Beth F. Baker**

I am a resident of Montgomery County and a scholar and professor with decades of experience researching immigration and the impacts of mass deportation on local communities. The research findings are clear and have been replicated over and over by different scholars: mass deportation is not just bad for immigrants, it's bad for everyone. Mass deportation tears at the fabric of communities, harming citizens, legal immigrants, and schools, and straining civic and religious institutions. Mass deportation also devastates local economies by removing taxpayers, workers, business owners, and consumers. Montgomery County, its residents, and the local economy are being placed at great risk by the operations of federal immigration enforcement. Worse, local authorities are actually helping the Trump administration harm our communities by failing to stand up to his bullying.

We know that at least 70% of immigrants detained by the second Trump administration have no criminal record whatsoever. We know that immigrants are statistically less likely to ever commit a crime than are US-born citizens. We know that many of the people placed in detention have pathways towards legal status if they are granted due process, but they are being detained and deported anyway. We know that many of the people being placed in detention are long-term residents with US-citizen children; they are members of communities and families, our co-workers, our neighbors, our teachers, our community leaders. This must stop!

**The Promoting Community Trust - Immigrant Protections Act** is a small step in the right direction for Montgomery County. It establishes common-sense limitations on collaboration with federal immigration authorities and spells out how the county is to respond to requests by these authorities. Indeed, the bill does not go far enough in protecting our communities and rights because it retains a clause allowing law-enforcement authorities to alert ICE when individuals are being released from prison or jail after committing certain crimes, even though they have met the conditions for their release and should, in accordance with the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, be released from bondage.

I urge all the council members to vote in favor of Expedited Bill 35-25, County Administration - Immigrant Protections (Promoting Community Trust - Immigrant Protections Act). I also urge you to continue taking steps to provide additional resources to families devastated by the deportation madness. Thank you for your consideration.