



"Dedicated to the Unfinished work of Equal Opportunity and Justice for All"

****PUBLIC TESTIMONY****

January 13, 2026

Testimony in Support of Expedited Bill 35-25

The Trust Act (Promoting Community Trust – Immigrant Protections Act)
Montgomery County Council

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Good afternoon, Council President Fani-González, Vice President Balcombe, and Members of the Montgomery County Council:

My name is **Radwan Chowdhury**, and I am a **resident of Burtonsville, Maryland**. I am here today to express my strong support for **Expedited Bill 35-25, the Trust Act**, legislation that will codify essential immigrant protections, safeguard civil rights, and strengthen trust between our communities and Montgomery County government.

I want to begin by recognizing the **immeasurable contributions immigrants make to Montgomery County, the State of Maryland, and our nation as a whole**. Immigrants are small business owners, entrepreneurs, healthcare professionals, educators, essential workers, and innovators. They create jobs, expand our tax base, and fuel economic growth. They are parents raising families, neighbors caring for neighbors, and community leaders volunteering their time and talents. Quite simply, immigrants are a vital part of the fabric that holds our communities together.

Montgomery County is one of the most diverse counties in the nation. Nearly half of our residents are immigrants or children of immigrants. That diversity is not a weakness—it is a strength. Immigrant-owned businesses anchor our commercial corridors, revitalize neighborhoods, and sustain local economies. Immigrant workers are essential to healthcare, construction, hospitality, childcare, and countless other sectors that keep this County functioning every day.

Expedited Bill 35-25 is about trust, safety, and good governance. The Trust Act ensures that County employees do not ask about or investigate immigration status except where required by law. It limits the use of County resources for federal civil immigration enforcement unless there is a valid judicial warrant or a genuine criminal matter. It protects residents from intimidation or discrimination based on perceived immigration status and ensures that County services are accessible to all residents, regardless of where they were born, to the extent allowed by law.

This legislation does **not** interfere with criminal law enforcement. It does not shield anyone from accountability. Montgomery County police will continue to enforce the law, investigate crimes, and work with prosecutors to keep our communities safe. What this bill does is ensure that residents feel safe reporting crimes, seeking medical care, enrolling children in school, and accessing County services without fear.



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When people trust their local government, **public safety improves**. Victims come forward. Witnesses cooperate. Families stabilize. Communities thrive. The Trust Act formalizes long-standing County practices and provides clarity, consistency, and legal certainty for residents and County employees alike.

Passing this bill sends a clear message: **Montgomery County values dignity, fairness, and inclusion**. It affirms that immigrants are not outsiders—they are integral members of our community whose contributions strengthen our County and our country.

I respectfully urge the Council to **pass Expedited Bill 35-25 without weakening its protections** and to stand firmly for community trust, civil rights, and public safety.

Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to speak.