HB0403 - Immigration Enforcement - County Boards of Education, Public Institutions of Higher 
Education, and Hospitals - Policies 
Presented to Hon. Luke Clippinger and Members of the House Judiciary Committee 
February 11, 2020 1:00 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the House Judiciary Committee a favorable report on 
HB0403 Immigration Enforcement - County Boards of Education, Public Institutions of Higher 
Education, and Hospitals - Policies, sponsored by Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. We work to ensure 
every childbearing individual has the freedom to decide if, when, and how many children to 
have. The safety of one’s community is a factor in this type of decision-making. Reproductive 
justice cannot be obtained if a child cannot be raised in safety and with dignity, and instances in 
which parents are unjustly forced apart from their children. Immigration policies are often used 
to express society’s prejudices about which bodies are valued and which ones are not. In the 
spirit of reproductive justice, we support HB0403.

This legislation seeks to clarify the parameters of state and local participation in federal civil 
immigration enforcement efforts on certain premises through the guidance of the state attorney 
general. We are particularly supportive of HB0403 calling for state and local governments to 
create and institute policies at hospitals to ensure accessibility to the public good regardless of 
immigration status. Without clear assurances, child-bearing individuals may delay or simply 
not seek urgent pregnancy-related medical services at hospitals for fear of being turned into the 
authorities. Women will not receive timely prenatal testing, miscarriage management, and 
hospital deliveries – that could lead to maternal or infant mortality, as well as infertility. 
Without assurances, undocumented families will fear that giving birth in hospitals means 
risking mothers and infants being deported, leaving behind other children that would be 
motherless.

Reproductive justice calls for the right to experience healthy pregnancies and to parent with 
dignity. The absence of safety affects the health of both men and women and can structure 
important life decisions around fertility, birth, and parenthood. Therefore, NARAL Pro-Choice 
Maryland urges a favorable report on HB0403. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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