



Outlook

written testimony - HoCo Council legislative session - February 4, 2026

From Adil Ahmed [REDACTED]

Date Tue 2/3/2026 4:03 PM

To councilmail@howardcountmd.gov <councilmail@howardcountmd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

 1 attachment (60 KB)

Letter to HoCo Council- Adil Ahmed - Written Testimony, February 4, 2026.pdf;

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Good afternoon,

Please find my written testimony for the record attached for the two bills up for discussion tomorrow, February 4, 2026. I do not intend to testify in person.

Sincerely,

Adil Ahmed
[REDACTED]

Dear Distinguished Members of the Howard County Council,

I, Adil Ahmed, am writing to offer favorable written testimony for the two pieces of legislation up for discussion by the Council on February 4, 2026.

As a member of the Howard County Muslim Alliance, I am writing to express my community's strong support for these bills.

I. RE: County Executive Ball's Emergency Legislation - Amending – Howard County Building Code – I-3 Use group

Thank you, County Executive Ball, for filing this emergency legislation upon notice that a private owner of a commercial warehouse was intending to utilize a gap in our zoning rules to house detained human beings.

In addition to fixing the gap in our land use law, we must acknowledge that commercial warehouses were never designed to house humans. We have seen the human rights abuses by the current leaders of the federal government against these detained individuals with our very own eyes, and we can only expect more of the same. Requiring a final inspection based on the intended use will ensure that we are holding these private operators to the fullest extent of the law.

Furthermore, it should be noted that when and if the current activities in these warehouses across the country are found to be illegal - the County will have the right to revoke permits at that point as well.

Lastly, we appreciate the social stance you are taking here - Howard County is a county of immigrants, a truly diverse fabric. Allowing this warehouse to operate here, particularly along this critical commercial corridor, will surely scare away the very folks, documented and undocumented, who make Howard County run and thrive. We cannot allow that.

II. RE: Councilwoman Walsh's CB17-2026 County Executive – Immigration Enforcement – Guidance

We also strongly urge the Council to support Councilwoman Walsh's legislation.

It's important for a government to operate with one voice. Therefore, establishing policy and educating county staff on that policy will ensure that those public employees who are on the front-lines of interacting with County residents are keeping all of us safe and not utilizing their privileged positions to put our most vulnerable in further jeopardy.

Thank you,
Adil Ahmed



Support for Emergency Legislation to Prohibit Private Detention Centers

From Beth Polen <[REDACTED]>

Date Tue 2/3/2026 6:20 AM

To Ball, Calvin <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; Walsh, Elizabeth <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>; Jones, Opel <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>; Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Jung, Debra <djung@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Dear County Executive Ball and Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for County Executive Calvin Ball's emergency legislation to prohibit private detention centers in Howard County, including the proposed project on Meadowridge Road.

Howard County has long prided itself on being a welcoming, inclusive community that prioritizes public safety, transparency, and human dignity. Private detention facilities—particularly those operated for profit—run counter to these values. Across the country, such facilities have raised serious concerns related to accountability, oversight, conditions of confinement, and the erosion of local control over land use and public safety decisions.

The proposed Meadowridge Road project has understandably caused alarm among nearby residents and the broader community. Decisions of this magnitude should reflect the will and well-being of Howard County residents, not the interests of private corporations seeking to profit from incarceration or detention.

Emergency action is appropriate and necessary in this case. Prohibiting private detention centers will protect our community, uphold our shared values, and ensure that Howard County does not become a site for facilities that conflict with our commitment to equity and justice.

Thank you for your leadership and for taking decisive action to protect the interests of Howard County residents. I urge the Council to support and swiftly pass this emergency legislation.

Sincerely,

Beth R. Polen
[REDACTED]

YES to introducing emergency legislation banning private detention centers

From Cory Redfern [REDACTED]
Date Sat 1/31/2026 5:07 PM
To Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

I live at [REDACTED] in Jessup. Per the news item <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/News013026>, I submit as testimony for the legislative session on February 2nd: please do introduce and vote YES on the emergency legislation to restrict the use of privately-owned detention facilities in Howard County.

v/r,
Cory Redfern

Please protect immigrants on Monday

From Emily Phillips [REDACTED]
Date Sat 1/31/2026 7:17 AM
To Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Hello,

I live in Columbia in your district. I saw that Calvin Ball is going to submit legislation to prohibit Privately owned detention centers, I encourage you to please vote yes and to make this into law. Howard county, especially Columbia, is built upon being accepting all people, a history that makes me very proud to live here. Anything we can do to protect immigrants (and apparently even US citizens) from mistreatment at the hands of those who are unaccountable is a good thing to do.

I would also ask if there is anything else the County/board can do to protect people from being targeted by ICE, please do so. Whether it's prohibiting our police from actively assisting, or enshrining further our status as a sanctuary county/state, or disallowing the targeting of specific areas like LA Mart etc.

I have never reached out to local officials like this before, but want to do my part on this incredibly important issue. Thank you for what you do for Howard County, and looking forward to seeing you continue to do so!

Thanks,
Emily

Oppose private detention facilities

From Kathryn S [REDACTED]
Date Sat 1/31/2026 2:44 PM
To Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

Hello,

I am a constituent from the Kings Contrivance village, 21046 and I am writing to ask that you support the legislation against private detention facilities that County Executive Ball plans to introduce on Monday. Private detention facilities are rife with opportunities for abuse; even worse when they are detaining our neighbors who are being detained morally and unconstitutionally.

Kathryn Schantz

Vote YES to prohibit ICE detention center

From Lisa Nugent [REDACTED]
Date Mon 2/2/2026 12:40 PM
To Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!! This email originated from someone outside of Howard County ***DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*** unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe Good afternoon - As a resident of Howard County for over 50 years, I'm writing to urge you to support the legislation to prohibit the development of an immigrant detention center in the county. We don't want increased ICE activity in our communities, or for our neighbors and families to live in fear. Respectfully, Lisa Nugent [REDACTED]

Bill to Restrict Use of Private Detention Centers

From Nikki Highsmith Vernick [REDACTED]
Date Mon 2/2/2026 3:06 PM
To Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>

WARNING!!!

This email originated from someone outside of Howard County
*****DO NOT CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS*****
unless you recognize the sender and know for sure that the content is safe

We learned late Saturday that the County Executive will be introducing an emergency bill this evening to restrict the use of private detention facilities in the county to be consistent with County policies while it considers future action.

We support adding this bill to the agenda and believe it deserves a public hearing. As you know, the Horizon Foundation envisions a Howard County free from systemic inequities where all people can live abundant and healthy lives.

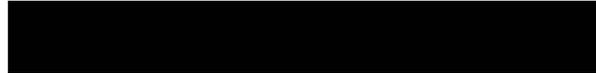
We believe the health of all residents matters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nikki

Nikki Highsmith Vernick

President and CEO



www.thehorizonfoundation.org

Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

[Subscribe to our newsletter!](#)



Disclaimer

The information contained in this communication from the sender is confidential. It is intended solely for use by the recipient and others authorized to receive it. If you are not the recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking action in relation of the contents of this information is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.

This email has been scanned for viruses and malware, and may have been automatically archived by Mimecast, a leader in email security and cyber resilience. Mimecast integrates email defenses with brand protection, security awareness training, web security, compliance and other essential capabilities. Mimecast helps protect large and small organizations from malicious activity, human error and technology failure; and to lead the movement toward building a more resilient world. To find out more, visit our website.