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**Statement From The Maryland Public Defender, Natasha M. Dartigue
SB245/HB444 Passes to End 287(g) in Maryland**

For nearly twenty years, 287(g) agreements have allowed ICE to use Maryland's local law enforcement as a deportation pipeline — tearing families apart, stripping individuals of due process, and destroying the community's trust in our justice system. Today this ends. No longer will a single county official have the power to hand every person arrested over to ICE for deportation, regardless of innocence or circumstance. No longer will our clients remain in a jail cell after being acquitted or having their charges dismissed simply because local officials were required to act as federal immigration agents. These practices never improved public safety. The Office of the Public Defender is grateful to Governor Moore, Senate President Ferguson, Speaker Peña-Melnyk, Chair Will Smith, and Delegate Nicole Williams for the humane and courageous legislation that makes clear Maryland will not be complicit in tearing communities apart. We also thank every advocate and legislator who fought for its passage. Today, Maryland chose due process and real public safety. Most importantly, Maryland chose to stand with fathers, mothers, workers, and neighbors - all those who make this state home. By choosing people, Maryland has affirmed that justice is not contingent on where you were born.

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About the Maryland Office of the Public Defender

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender provides legal representation to individuals who cannot afford an attorney in criminal and juvenile proceedings. OPD is committed to zealous advocacy, equal justice, and systemic reform.