



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Dr. Michelle Taylor, Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City Health Department
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	January 15, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

Council Bill 25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students calls for an informational hearing to discuss the impact of escalating federal immigration enforcement on City students. The resolution calls for the Baltimore City Public School System, the Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to participate in the hearing.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) appreciates the opportunity to review Council Bill 25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students. BCHD runs several programs and services in City Schools, including but not limited to the operation of school health suites in 113 schools, school-based health centers in four schools, and school-based violence prevention programming in two schools. BCHD also provides programs and services for City Schools students and their families outside of schools, including our Community Asthma and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention programs and clinical services (including but not limited to family planning, sexual and reproductive health, and immunizations).

BCHD has not observed any impacts of federal immigration enforcement on its in-school programming and services. However, the agency has seen impacts on City Schools students and their families through the programs it provides outside of schools.

With regard to our clinical operations, as immigration enforcement increased, BCHD's clinic attendance saw a slight decrease (although the agency cannot say for certain whether there is a direct causal relationship). While clients are cautious about sharing information related to their

immigration status, clinic staff have heard from clients about their experiences and concerns. Some of those concerns included the deportation of a family member, and fear of being deported while their children remain behind. In the alternative, they fear having their children deported while they remain in United States. We have also heard from mothers that they are concerned about being detained while bringing their children to or picking them up from school. Concerned clients also include some of our immigrant clients who do have legal status, because they have seen news reports making it clear that enforcement is not limited to individuals without legal status.

Our Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs and Community Asthma Program have also experienced effects of increased immigration enforcement. Program staff have found that immigrant families are more reluctant to participate in our programs and to allow home visits for assessment of lead and asthma triggers. Increased immigration enforcement erodes trust in government workers, leading to families sometimes withholding information, declining services, or disengaging with the program. As such, staff have worked to encourage immigrant families to participate in the programs.

BCHD recognizes the importance of a safe and welcoming environment where all children can thrive. Therefore, BCHD requests a **favorable** report on Council Bill 25-0042R.