

Katie Curran O'Malley

DEMOCRAT FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL

Plan to Protect New Americans and Refugees

Executive Summary

The Trump Administration exposed the inadequacy of legal protections for new Americans and refugees, as highlighted through the hateful and harmful policies of ICE and the Department of Homeland Security. While Donald Trump is no longer President, the lesson we have learned is that Maryland cannot delegate the protection of new Americans to the federal government. Maryland has been a leader in the civil rights of new Americans for years, including passing the DREAM Act, ending private ICE detention in Maryland, and requiring that ICE officers get a warrant before searching data or scanning photos held by MVA or other Maryland agencies. We need to continue to lead, working collaboratively with the federal government when possible, but relentlessly fighting for New Americans and vulnerable communities when necessary.

That work requires an experienced advocate. I have spent my 30-year career in public office advocating for the rights and interests of society's most vulnerable populations. This includes children, the abused, the victimized, the elderly, and critically, immigrant populations. But refugees and new Americans are not just groups that need protection. They already serve our communities, particularly as essential workers in the healthcare industry. They are critical workers in business sectors across the state and they are the ones who most fully emblemize the American experience. Protecting their rights is an investment in our economic future.

As Attorney General, I will be a tenacious advocate to protect the rights of the immigrant community by:

- **Challenging Illegal Federal Immigration Policies and Committing to a Comprehensive Non-Cooperation Policy with Detention Requests**
- **Establishing a Statewide Right to Counsel in Immigration and Housing Courts**
- **Protecting Seasonal Workers**
- **Prosecuting Wage Theft**
- **Advocating for New Laws in Maryland**

Challenging Illegal Federal Immigration Policies and Committing to a Comprehensive Non-Cooperation Policy with Detention Requests

Immigration policy is a matter of human rights, not partisanship. My commitment to vulnerable Marylanders will always come first. I promise to draw on my 30-years of courtroom expertise to hold any President, including President Biden, accountable if their Administration fails to protect our neighbors. A comprehensive policy of non-cooperation with detention requests will ensure that individuals will be able to trust their interactions with Maryland law enforcement and social services will not lead to their detention and deportation.

Establishing a Statewide Right to Counsel in Immigration and Housing Courts

Every Marylander is owed their due process rights, including those in immigration and housing courts. I will push for greater legal aid funding in the state budget, as well as a state law guaranteeing a right to legal counsel for immigrants facing deportation and tenants facing eviction.

Protecting Seasonal Workers

Seasonal workers are an important part of Maryland's economy, particularly on the shore and. But they have been frequently targeted in worksite raids and are high risk targets of wage theft. I promise to be a diligent defender of our seasonal workers and ensure they are treated with dignity and the legal protections they deserve.

Prosecuting Wage Theft

Wage theft is a problem across Maryland, but it is particularly pernicious for the immigrant community, who often feel no recourse to prosecute such theft. I will work with labor groups, immigrant advocates, and legal experts to craft policies that better target wage theft and seek the maximum legal penalty against employers and contractors who commit wage theft.

Advocating for New Laws in Maryland

I strongly supported the Maryland Legislature's veto overrides of the Dignity Not Detention Act (HB16) and Maryland Driver Privacy Act (HB23). But there is still important legislation that can be passed in this area, including increasing earned income tax credit eligibility for Marylanders without citizenship or documentation and fighting for progressive criminal justice reform. My campaign has put out an expansive criminal justice reform plan that includes expanded police accountability measures, marijuana legalization, and ending the domestic violence crisis. I will advocate in the General Assembly for each one of these proposals.