



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 567 – Maryland Online Data Privacy Act of 2024

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, Members of Economic Matters –

Right now, in Maryland, we have no comprehensive online privacy law. And this is a problem. Companies are collecting and selling personal and sensitive data about our lives without our knowledge or consent. When you download that ‘free’ app, it isn’t really free. We get that app in exchange for our personal data that it collects, usually unbeknownst to us. We are both the consumer and the product. At least 70% of mobile apps share data with third parties, and one study found that 15% of those reviewed were connected to five or more trackers. This data could be our mental health data.¹ It could be our reproductive data. It could be our location data. That data is collected, aggregated, and sold. All without our knowledge or consent.

HB 567 includes:

- Data minimization – making sure companies are only collecting and processing the data needed for the transaction at hand.
- Data protection – ensuring companies keep the data they do collect safe
- Consumer control over personal data – giving consumers the right to know what is collected and who it is shared with, along with the right to correct the data, delete the data, and opt out of targeted ads, sale of data and profiling.
- Extra layers of protection for sensitive data. Sensitive data includes:
 - Biometrics
 - Geolocation
 - Reproductive, mental health, and gender affirming care
 - Racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, citizenship or immigration status
 - Personal data that a controller knows or has reason to know is that of a child

Because this is a large bill, I am submitting with this testimony an overview of the bill for the Committee’s convenience.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 567.

¹ “One company advertised the names and home addresses of people with depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress or bipolar disorder. Another sold a database featuring thousands of aggregated mental health records, starting at \$275 per 1,000 ‘ailment contacts.’ For years, data brokers have operated in a controversial corner of the internet economy, collecting and reselling Americans’ personal information for government or commercial use, such as targeted ads. But the pandemic-era rise of telehealth and therapy apps has fueled an even more contentious product line: Americans’ mental health data. And the sale of it is perfectly legal in the United States, even without the person’s knowledge or consent.” [Washington Post](#) 2/13/23