

February 27, 2020

Emily Blank
3718 Shepherd St
Brentwood, MD 20712
emilyblank@gmail.com / (301) 277-5842

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB892
Public Information Act – Motor Vehicle Administration – Warrant for Personal Information and Reporting

TO: Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, members of the Environment & Transportation Committee

FROM: Emily Blank

“When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them. The sojourners who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” – Leviticus 19:33-34

My name is Emily Blank, and I am a resident of District 47A. I am writing in support of HB892, which would prohibit ICE from searching the MVA database and records.

I am an economics professor at Howard University in Washington, DC and a lay cantor. As a professor, I know that when students share private information with me, it is my responsibility to keep that information private, not to turn it over to federal authorities. I do not know whether I currently teach any students who are undocumented, but all of my students should be able to drive and to go about their daily lives without fear of deportation.

Maryland granted drivers licenses to undocumented residents with assurances that their information would not be used against them. Yet, the Motor Vehicle Administration’s database and records can be and are searched by all federal law enforcement agencies, including ICE. Allowing undocumented residents licenses entails inclusion in these databases; allowing them to be therefore captured by ICE is cruel — a kind of entrapment. This bill would prohibit ICE from accessing MVA records for civil immigration enforcement purposes.

Living within the borders of the United States without proper documentation is not a felony. There is no reason to cause undocumented persons, some of whom have lived in this country for years and are members of our community, to live in terror. **I urge a favorable report on HB892.**

Sincerely,
Emily C. Blank
Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. -Micah 6:8