



January 25, 2021

Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB234 – Personal Information - State and Local Agencies- Restrictions on Access

Dear Chair William C. Smith, Jr. and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee Members:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 234 entitled Personal Information - State and Local Agencies - Restrictions on Access, and also known as the Driver Privacy Act. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization.

Nearly ten years ago, when the Maryland state legislature passed laws extending driving privileges regardless of immigration status, it greenlighted significant economic growth, improved road safety, and kept hardworking families together in our state. This measure enabled immigrants who needed to drive for example for gainful employment, the ability to do so in a legal and regulated way. It helped increase spending, raised state revenue, and boosted our economy.

Last year, it was revealed that Maryland is one of four states that allows U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to comb through the Motor Vehicle Administration's database of registered drivers to search out undocumented immigrants without state or court approval.¹

In fact, according to reports, the Maryland Department of Transportation MVA began sharing all driver's license and identification-card images with the Maryland Image Repository System (MIRS) in 2011 – a database of over 10 million driver's license photos from the state MVA and Maryland State Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) which ICE can access. According to the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project, Maryland's system is one of the most broad and expansive in the state.

Several states now have provisions to limit or prohibit disclosure of motor-vehicle information to ICE including Vermont and Hawaii. It's time to add Maryland to that list. Passing HB23 will help avoid setting a dangerous precedent for the violation of civil liberties, and help prevent

government overreach while keeping families together and boosting our state's economy. **CAIR respectfully urges a favorable report on this measure. Thank you for your consideration.**

Sincerely,

Huzzaifa Muhammad
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Council on American-Islamic Relations
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References:

1. Vialpando, Madison. Maryland Program on Sharing Driver's License Data With ICE Is Most Invasive, Critics Say. <https://digitalprivacy.news/2020/12/03/maryland-program-on-sharing-driver-data-with-ice-is-most-invasive-critics-say/> . Accessed January 20, 2021.