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District 8

Testimony in Support of Bill SB0234, Personal Information - State and Local Agencies -  
Restrictions on Access

To: Chair Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
From: Arielle Juberg

My name is Arielle Juberg. I live in Baltimore County in District 8. I am a member of Showing Up for Racial Justice in Baltimore and the Ally's Network for Casa de Maryland.

I am testifying in support of SB0234, Personal Information - State and Local Agencies - Restrictions on Access, which requires ICE to obtain a warrant in order to access personal information that the MVA gathers about drivers.

I would like to thank the General Assembly for voting in 2013 to open driving privileges to Maryland residents regardless of immigration status. The state has a clear and compelling interest in ensuring that roadways are safe and that drivers are licensed and aware of driving laws.

However, there has been a disturbing trend in recent years regarding MVA records and undocumented immigrants. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has used MVA data to harass, detain, and deport undocumented immigrants in Maryland. They are able to do so because the 2013 MD Highway Safety Act did not prohibit this action.

SB0234 will not prevent ICE and other agencies from accessing MVA information when there is probable cause of criminality. It simply adds a necessary check on ICE to balance the needs of law enforcement with the rights of all Maryland drivers.

I am sickened by the stories of my immigrant neighbors who are arrested and detained by ICE after they applied for a Maryland driver's license. Because there are no limitation on ICE's use of MVA data, immigrants are being arrested and detained when they have not committed any crime. They are separated from their families and can no longer support children and other members. More unlicensed drivers may be on the road because of legitimate fear of ICE. Our entire community lacks knowledge about when and why ICE is using MVA data. This type of unlimited, unregulated data sharing can weaken constituents' trust in institutions and damage the credibility of these offices.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report for Bill SB0234.