

Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee
SB712: Consumer Protection – Scanning Identification Cards and Driver's Licenses – Prohibition
Position: Favorable

March 16, 2022

Senator Kelley, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee

Honorable Chair Kelley and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances financial justice and economic inclusion for Maryland consumers through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 8,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

MCRC is in support of SB 712.

A common practice among businesses in Maryland is to require ID of consumers who are returning a purchase – even when they have a valid receipt. Businesses then scan the ID, which allows the business to record personal and non-pertinent information about the consumer. In our internet-centric society, that personal data is easily converted into money for the business through data sales and potential woes for the consumer. Businesses should not require that consumers forgo their right to privacy in order to complete a basic transaction.

SB 712 is a simple fix to a problem that has the potential to grow exponentially as Big Data continues to monetize personal information. By restricting the scanning of licenses except when legally mandated or logistically necessary, this bill turns off the faucet of private data pouring into corporate bank accounts. Twelve states have already passed similar laws; Maryland should extend the same consumer privacy protections to residents of our state.

For all these reasons, we support SB 712 and urge a favorable report.

Best,
Marceline White
Executive Director