



Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee
SB861: Consumer Protection - Scanning or Swiping Identification Cards and Driver's Licenses -
Prohibition
Position: Favorable

March 15, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee

Honorable Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a people-centered movement to expand economic rights, housing justice, and community reinvestment for working families, low-income communities, and communities of color. Economic Action Maryland provides direct assistance today while passing legislation and regulations to create systemic change in the future.

We are here in support of SB861.

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.

SB861 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 SB861 and urge a favorable report.

Best,
Marceline White
Executive Director