

February 8, 2024

Honorable Chair Luke Clippinger
House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0555 Prohibition of Unauthorized Dissemination of Personal Identifying Information

Dear Chair Clippinger and House Judiciary Committee Members:

I am writing to strongly support and provide testimony on the critical importance of prohibiting the unauthorized dissemination of personal identifying information (also known as doxxing) at the state level.

For many years, doxxing of community organizers, activists, and others has been used as a fearmongering tactic to silence movements, especially movements for justice.

I am a long time community organizer. In February of 2023, my name, picture, social media handles, and the school I attended were published on a well-known doxxing website used as a tool to scare people into silence. I was doxxed because of my justice advocacy work, and this instance of doxxing was very damaging to my mental health. To be exposed in that manner, with no autonomy over the way my image and words were being misconstrued to paint an awful picture of me, was disheartening at best and downright dehumanizing at worst.

After I was doxxed, I felt like I was walking around on campus with a target on my back. I had no idea who may have seen the website, who may have made assumptions about me or people I associated with, or who may have had ill intentions. This constant mental chess game was exhausting, and took a large toll on my mental health.

By supporting HB0555, you prevent instances like these from hurting any members of the Maryland community in the future. Doxxing is a serious threat that leads to harassment, threats to education and financial opportunities, and in more serious cases, stalking and assault. This is a very serious issue that needs to be addressed, which you can take actionable steps towards through supporting this bill.

Thank you very much,
Ahlam Majadly