

## **SB889 Testimony**

February 24, 2025

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

### **Re: Testimony Favorable for SB0889 Criminal Law - Distribution of Students' Personal Information - Prohibition**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

My name is Ikram Abdu, and I am a student at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am here today to express my strong support for SB889, which seeks to protect young individuals from the harmful and dangerous impacts of doxxing.

We live in a world where almost everything is digital, social media is not just for staying in touch, it is where we network, apply for jobs, and express ourselves. But for some, it is also where they become targets. Doxxing does not just expose information; it puts real people in real danger. No one should have to fear for their safety just because they have an opinion or express their beliefs. Disagreements should not turn into personal attacks, but doxxing takes private details and weaponizes them, leaving people vulnerable to harassment, threats, and real-world harm.

I know firsthand how devastating the consequences of doxxing can be. Recently, I was falsely accused of an act I did not commit, and my full name was shared online alongside inflammatory allegations. As a result, I was subjected to an overwhelming wave of online harassment, including death threats and messages from people claiming they would report me to my university and contact my past employers. I was forced to deactivate all my social media accounts and wipe my digital footprint to the best of my ability. It is already scary to walk on the streets being a visible Muslim and Black but the additional layer of being targeted online for something I would never do is extremely terrifying.

Doxxing can completely upend a person's life, putting their safety at risk, costing them job opportunities, taking a toll on their mental health, and disrupting their education. Many young people hold back from sharing their opinions or engaging in important conversations out of fear that their personal information could be exposed and weaponized against them. This bill is a crucial step in protecting individuals under 25, ensuring they are not left vulnerable to these harmful attacks.

This legislation is a necessary step in holding perpetrators accountable and sending a clear message that using personal information to harass, intimidate, or endanger others is unacceptable. By passing SB0889, Maryland can help ensure that young people are protected and feel safe both online and in their daily lives.

I do not want anyone else to go through what I went through. The fear, the anxiety, and the constant worry of being recognized or targeted are not something anyone should have to live with. No one should feel unsafe just walking on their own campus or existing in their own space. This kind of harm doesn't just disappear when the screen turns off, it follows you everywhere. So I urge the committee to support this bill and take a stand to protect young people from the lasting impact of doxxing.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

**Sincerely,**

Ikram Abdu

University of Maryland, College Park