



TESTIMONY FOR SB0977
State and Local Agencies - Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law -
Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Lam

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative

Coalition Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0977 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members are appalled at the prospect of federal immigration authorities' unauthorized access and misuse of personal data collected by our state and local agencies and paid for by our tax dollars. This bill aims to protect the privacy of Maryland residents by restricting state and local agencies from providing access to databases, facilities, or buildings to individuals seeking to enforce federal immigration law without proper legal authorization. The bill seeks to ensure that personal data is not used for federal immigration enforcement without a valid warrant issued by a federal or state court.

SB0977 mandates that state and local agencies deny access to personal information and photographs unless presented with a valid warrant issued by a federal or state court. It requires the Attorney General to enforce these provisions and outlines disciplinary actions for state employees who violate the act. The bill also prohibits the use of facial recognition technology by state or local agencies for federal immigration enforcement purposes without proper legal authorization.

By limiting access to personal data, the bill helps prevent the potential misuse of information and protects residents from unwarranted federal immigration enforcement actions. This is particularly significant for our immigrant communities, as it provides an additional layer of protection and promotes trust in state and local agencies. The bill ensures that personal data remains safeguarded, fostering a sense of security and privacy for all Maryland residents. By upholding these principles, SB0977 aligns with Maryland's commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of its residents.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition steadfastly supports this bill and similar initiatives that protect all Marylanders' privacy and security.