

Hearing Date: February 19, 2025
Louise Weissman
Greenbelt, 20770

Testimony on SB#977
Position: Favorable
State and Local Agencies - Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law
Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Louise Weissman

My name is Louise Weissman. I am a resident of District 22 in Greenbelt. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#977: State and Local Agencies - Information of Federal Immigration Law Restrictions on Access to information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)

I am 72 years old, and in this digital age, I spend a good deal of time protecting information about me from digital exploitation. Like me, many seniors are vulnerable to unwarranted data sharing illegally used by other individuals, applications, or organizations without permission. This is a universal problem experienced not only by seniors, but children, teenagers, and adults: citizens or not. I am also Jewish and Jewish text, history, traditions, and values compel us “to welcome the stranger.” All Immigrants, whether they are documented or not, have rights that guarantee due-process and protection from discrimination. Those rights must be honored as these people are our co-workers, our neighbors, our friends, and members of our families who came to our country seeking safety, freedom, and a better life.

We must have the means to safeguard our limited state and local resources so they are not used to further any administration’s racist and xenophobic agenda, including: family separation, detention, or mass deportation of immigrants who live in Maryland. Our immigrant communities should be protected from the harmful effects of any anti-immigration policies passed at the federal level. Immigrants should also be able to access government services they are eligible for and not have to worry that their information will be shared with federal immigration authorities. We must work to strengthen protections for all Marylanders against intrusive and unnecessary federal interventions. So I urge that the State of Maryland pass legislation that can assure immigrant residents that federal agencies will not exploit or target these specific Marylanders. The Maryland Data Privacy Act will block ICE from obtaining warrantless access to any Maryland agencies databases.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a (favorable/favorable with amendments/unfavorable) report on SB#.977