

**SB977****State and Local Agencies – Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law – Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)**

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 19, 2025

**SUPPORT**

**Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB977**, which strengthens privacy protections for Maryland residents by restricting access to state and local government databases, facilities, and buildings for federal immigration enforcement purposes unless accompanied by a valid court warrant.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities.

As the largest private provider of human services in the state, Catholic Charities of Baltimore is committed to supporting immigrants through our Esperanza Center. The Esperanza Center, serving as a vital resource for immigrants since 1963, offers support through a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, providing essential services in education, healthcare, immigration legal matters, family reunification, and general community support to help immigrants from all over the world navigate life in their new country. As an organization that works closely with thousands of immigrants each year, we understand the importance of protecting their personal information—especially in a time when data privacy is at risk.

The Maryland Data Privacy Act directly addresses this concern by ensuring privacy protections for immigrant communities. These protections are essential for maintaining trust between immigrant communities and other government institutions. When immigrant residents feel secure that their personal information will not be shared without proper legal authority, they are more likely to report crimes, seek medical care, and participate fully in their children's education—actions that strengthen the fabric of our Maryland communities.

**For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB977.**

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy