

Dear **Members of the Judiciary Committee,**

This testimony is written in collaboration with Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. I am also writing in collaboration with CASA de Maryland. I am a resident and community association board member of **District 46 and the ZIP code 21224 – one of the most immigrant-dependent places in the State. Immigrants, especially from Central America, are the backbone of my community. I am testifying in support of HB1431, the Maryland Data Privacy Act.**

President Trump's cruel attack on immigrants has already begun, and it is incumbent upon Maryland to protect the people that he is dedicated to demonizing: our friends, our neighbors, hard-working people who help build our communities and don't deserve to live in fear. Federal immigration authorities have a history of abusing state-held databases containing personal information in order to help them target immigrants: after Maryland allowed undocumented immigrants to apply for driver's licenses in 2013, ICE began using MVA data in this way. In 2021, the General Assembly passed the Driver Privacy Act over the governor's veto to shut down this tactic. However, many other agencies in Maryland maintain databases of personal information that can include immigrants, and those databases are still open to ICE scrutiny. With the federal government on a mission to imprison as many immigrants as possible, we must act to close this loophole in our data privacy.

HB1431 would ban all Maryland state and local government agencies from sharing access to their databases of sensitive personal information, or information taken from those databases, with federal immigration authorities unless those authorities have a real judicial warrant, signed by a judge, authorizing their access to private information. In addition, HB1431 seeks to fight back against the president's revocation of the "sensitive locations" policy by requiring government agencies to deny access to their buildings and facilities to immigration authorities unless they have a warrant signed by a judge. While this does not provide complete protection to people attempting to access resources and services, it at least makes it more difficult for ICE to target local and state government facilities for raids/general enforcement actions.

The law does not require us to freely lend the federal government our resources to help President Trump conduct his anti-immigrant campaign. We must stand up for our friends and neighbors by refusing to be complicit. It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB1431, the Maryland Data Privacy Act.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,

**John Preston Ford**

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