



Testimony - HB 1431, State and Local Agencies - Enforcement of Federal Immigration
Law - Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)

Favorable

House Judiciary Committee

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Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairman Clippinger & Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

SEIU Local 500, as one of Maryland's largest public sector unions representing over 23,000 workers, expresses our support for House Bill 1431, the **Maryland Data Privacy Act**. In recent years, the erosion of data privacy protections has led to increased fear and uncertainty within immigrant communities. The Maryland Data Privacy Act, HB 1431, takes critical steps to restore trust by ensuring that state and local agencies, as well as law enforcement entities, are prohibited from sharing personal information, facial recognition data, and access to public facilities with federal immigration authorities unless a valid warrant is presented.

This legislation is crucial not only for protecting the privacy of all Maryland residents but also for fostering trust between immigrant communities and public institutions. By clearly delineating the boundaries of federal immigration enforcement within our state, we promote the values of dignity, safety, and fairness.

SEIU Local 500 stands with immigrant communities and supports the Maryland Data Privacy Act because it will:

1. **Limit Access to Databases and Facilities:** Law enforcement agencies and state or local government units must deny access to sensitive data and facilities to individuals seeking to enforce federal immigration law without a valid court-issued warrant.

2. **Protect Personal Information:** The Act prohibits the disclosure of personal data, photographs, and biometric information, such as facial recognition scans, to federal immigration authorities unless due legal processes are followed.
3. **Provide Accountability and Transparency:** Agencies must maintain records of all access requests and submit annual reports to the Attorney General and the General Assembly to ensure compliance and transparency.
4. **Ensure Enforcement and Penalties:** The Attorney General is empowered to enforce these protections, with civil penalties for violations and disciplinary actions for state employees who fail to comply.

In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Maryland Driver Privacy Act to protect immigrants and safeguard their sensitive data. We once again ask you to strengthen those protections by passing HB 1431.

We ask you to pass this bill out of committee with a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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SEIU Local 500