



Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee

February 27, 2025

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

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The ACLU of Maryland supports HB 1431, which seeks to prevent state or local law enforcement from sharing private information about Marylanders who are immigrants without a valid warrant issued by a federal or state court. It is important that the bill would apply to state contractors and grantees to the same extent as it applies to state and local agencies.

The harms of widespread immigration enforcement and mass deportation are well documented and include disrupting communities, ripping families apart, and causing widespread panic and fear. In fact, a 2022 report on 287(g) programs found that instead of increasing safety, local law enforcement colluding with ICE to enforce immigration law actually did the reverse, having a negative impact on public safety and public health.¹ Dragnet enforcement and local involvement creates an atmosphere where immigrant residents are less likely to report crimes or serve as witnesses, making everyone less safe. Maryland should not be expending our limited resources and capacity to be involved in these enforcement actions and instead focus on tactics that are shown to improve communities and public safety.

Maryland has long recognized the importance of creating a welcoming environment and supporting immigrant families and individuals in our community. In 2013, the state extended driving privileges to all Marylanders regardless of immigration status. In this national moment, when federal actors move to terrorize communities and unregulated agencies access sensitive data with complete disregard for privacy rights, it is our duty to protect the sensitive data being collected and maintained by the state.

¹ License to Abuse: How ICE's 287(g) Program Empowers Racist Sheriffs and Civil Rights Violations. (2022). American Civil Liberties Union.
<https://www.aclu.org/publications/license-abuse-how-ices-287g-program-empowers-racist-sheriffs>

Not only should Marylanders be able to control who has access to their data, but the threat of widespread dragnet immigration sweeps and the rhetoric around mass deportation at the national level compels us to call on local law enforcement to stop sharing personal information of residents with ICE. The ACLU-MD stands on our commitment to immigrants' rights and privacy rights. It is time to retake control of our data and ensure that Maryland communities do not collaborate with ICE.

For the foregoing reasons, the ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 1431.