



Prince George's County Municipal Association

An Association of 27 Municipalities



Testimony Favorable SUPPORT House Bill 1431

House Judiciary Committee

February 27, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Barlett, and member of the Committee,

The Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) writes on behalf of the 27 municipalities that collectively represent more than 955,000 residents, to share our strong support for House Bill 1431 **State and Local Agencies - Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law - Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act)**.

In recent years, the erosion of data privacy protections has led to increased fear and uncertainty within our communities. The Maryland Data Privacy Act HB1431 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, access to public facilities with federal immigration authorities unless a valid warrant is presented.

Prince George's Municipal Association (PGCMA) stands with immigrant communities and supports the Maryland Data Privacy Act because:

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.

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.

In 2021, this legislature took action to protect immigrants and safeguard their sensitive data. PGCMA once again calls on this legislature to act ([2021, MGA HB23](#)). **Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) urges the committee to provide a Favorable Report on House Bill 1431.**

Sincerely,

Celina R. Benitez

Mayor Celina R. Benitez, President, Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA)

Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) members: Berwyn Heights, Bladensburg, Bowie, Brentwood, Capitol Heights, Cheverly, College Park, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, District Heights, Eagle Harbor, Edmonston, Fairmount Heights, Forest Heights, Glenarden, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, Landover Hills, Laurel, Morningside, Mount Rainier, New Carrollton, North Brentwood, Riverdale Park, Seat Pleasant, University Park, and Upper Marlboro.