



Testimony on House Bill 711 – Favorable

HB711 – Data Privacy – Consumer Data, Public Records, and Message Switching System (Data Privacy Act)

Economic Matters Committee

February 24, 2026

SERVICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION
CTW, CLC

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Dear Honorable Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jaime Contreras, and I am the Southern Regional Director and Executive Vice President of 32BJ SEIU. I am pleased to offer favorable testimony in support of **HB711 – the Data Privacy Act**.

32BJ is the largest building service union in the country, representing over 185,000 members up and down the East Coast and over 4,000 members across Maryland. Our members are primarily immigrants and people of color, and make up the workforce of essential cleaners, door-people, airport workers, and other building service workers who keep our homes, workplaces, schools, and transportation hubs up and running. As an organization that is committed to advancing and protecting worker rights, we strongly support and urge the passage of HB 711.

With our dedicated members, we fight to build a just society where immigrants can live free of fear and are treated with dignity and respect. Unfortunately, communities nationwide are facing an unprecedented attack by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Immigration arrests have increased across the country and nearly tripled in Maryland.¹ The current administration's immigration dragnet has left few communities unscathed. Our union family is no exception: multiple 32BJ members have been subjected to unjust detention by ICE.

At its core, HB711 is about upholding Maryland's commitment to privacy, fairness, and the protection of all its residents. Right now, dangerous loopholes in the current law allow sensitive personal data collected by state agencies to be funneled to ICE through third-party data brokers and law enforcement data-sharing networks. This bill closes those loopholes and stops the flow of Marylanders' data into the hands of ICE and other federal agencies that use it to fuel deportations, family separation, and racial profiling.

Over the past year, increasingly reckless federal immigration policy has sown fear and distrust across our union's membership and damaged the broader social fabric that holds our state together. As a result of these cruel enforcement tactics, employers are seeing disruption and uncertainty in their workplaces, and violations of labor and wage laws are going unaddressed because workers fear that speaking up

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could put themselves or their families at risk. By reducing the risks associated with accessing basic state services like procuring a driver's license or reporting a crime, this bill would do much to restore a sense of normalcy and dignity for working Marylanders across the state.

Specifically, this bill strengthens protections by closing driver data loopholes to prevent third-party entities from sharing driver information with ICE; updating the MPIA to ensure that records requests cannot be weaponized for immigration enforcement and to protect data currently treated as "public" but used to target immigrants; and strengthening MODPA by limiting what counts as "publicly available information," explicitly protecting geolocation data from phones and vehicles, ending the law enforcement exemption that ICE exploits, and prohibiting the use of non-sensitive data to infer sensitive personal information. These reforms are essential to restoring trust between communities and state government.

While 32BJ's strong contracts provide our members with protections in the workplace, these safeguards cannot accompany them once their shifts end. This is where lawmakers must step in and do the right thing.

Mass surveillance and unchecked data sharing threaten the privacy and safety of all Marylanders—not just immigrant communities. When state agencies become pipelines for federal immigration enforcement, community trust erodes and public safety suffers. Maryland must ensure that state-collected data is never used to harm the families and residents it is meant to protect. State agencies should be a shield, not a conduit, for ICE.

For these reasons, on behalf of 32BJ SEIU, I urge the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB711.**

Sincerely,

Jaime Contreras
Southern Regional Director and Executive Vice President
32BJ SEIU

ⁱ Kate Amara & Khiree Stewart, *'It scares me': Marylanders protesting as data shows ICE arrests nearly tripled in 2025*, WBAL-TV 11 Baltimore, Jan 12, 2026.
<https://www.wbaltv.com/article/marylanders-protesting-data-ice-arrests-nearly-tripled-2025/69980610>

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