

**Testimony on HB0711 – Favorable
Data Privacy Act
Economic Matters Committee
February 24, 2026**

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

My name is Marcia Greenberg, and I submit this testimony in FAVOR of HB 0711, focused on Data Privacy.

While this bill focuses on protecting our immigrant families, and should do so, it is also a critical bill for protecting us ALL: Many of us have been concerned for months now that ICE was being trained and set up to serve as a sort of secret police. We have been concerned that they would use technology and sensitive, personal data to track innocent individuals – particularly relating to immigration status. But we have also known that whatever systems they develop and perfect, would then be easily applied to us all. It has become increasingly apparent that billions of taxpayer dollars are being spent to set up a repressive system. They ignore first, fourth and fifth amendment rights. They now seek to identify not only non-citizen individuals, but also people who are working to protect innocent neighbors and to uphold our constitutional rights.

In the early 1990s, I worked in countries in Eastern Europe where the government had spied on people, undermined trust among friends and members of families, and repressed public dissent. Developing a culture of democratic engagement was impeded by experiences with STASI and secret police. Gradually, the secret files that were kept on dissenters were discovered and exposed.

We, in the United States of America, are heading in that direction. Our federal government is becoming more of a threat to us all – and to our democracy – all the time. The ONLY hope for our future is if the States set standards and protect our privacy.

I implore you, therefore, to take this Data Privacy Act seriously. It is critical for the many innocent immigrants in the state of Maryland who are not “the worst of the worst” and who have NO criminal records. It is critical for protecting individuals and families who came to our country for liberties that did not exist in their home

countries – but that are now seriously threatened in the United States. But it is also critical for each and every one of us. Once data is accessed, it is “out of the bag” – it is out and available for use by the wrong elements and for repressive purposes. We have already seen threats to all of us as social security and internal revenue service data is hacked or unlawfully exposed. Please do not allow the same to happen for Maryland data.

We, residents of Maryland, depend on you to take an honest look at how companies with data and gaining access to data, are threatening us all. In many ways, it may be too late. But in any ways that you can use the laws of Maryland to protect sensitive, personal data that is held by the State of Maryland about us, please do! Please protect ALL of our data.

I ask for a favorable report, but with one amendment: This so VERY serious that I urge you to amend this legislation to be an Emergency Act - to ensure that its provisions are implemented and go into effect with every possible sense of urgency.

Thank you – and please report out this bill, HB 711, **favorably with that one amendment.**

Thank you,

Marcia Greenberg

St Mary's County