



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

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

Doctors for Camp Closure (D4CC) Maryland Chapter offers favorable testimony in support of **HB711 – the Data Privacy Act**.

Doctors for Camp Closure is a non-partisan organization of over 2,200 physicians and health care professionals from all specialties who oppose inhumane detention. We advocate for humane and just treatment for all.

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.

In recent years, the erosion of data privacy protections has led to increased fear and uncertainty within immigrant communities. Our immigrant patients must have their privacy protected. This legislation is critical for our patients' welfare.

If our patients' privacy is not protected then they are at a much higher risk of deportation. There is nothing that is worse for our patients' health than the fear of and then actual deportation. Once a family member is deported, the family members suffer physically and psychologically. Children lose their ability to thrive and function in school. They regress emotionally which then takes a physical toll on their bodies. Families lose a wage earner so they suffer economically.

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.

ICE actions have already created an environment of fear and uncertainty which discourages individuals from seeking medical care, pursuing education, accessing legal resources, or engaging with law enforcement. As a result, our communities, public health, and overall safety are at risk.

Without protection of data, our patients will be increasingly targeted and will feel even less safe to venture out seeking medical care. This not only has a negative impact upon the individual patient but also has a damaging effect on their families and communities. If patients with chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure are too afraid to seek medical care, they face a high risk of disability and preventable deaths. That results in suffering for them and their entire family. And we know all too well from epidemics of infectious diseases such as Covid and tuberculosis that if an individual is afraid to seek care, entire communities are then at risk.

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, Doctors for Camp Closure urges the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB711**.

Sincerely,
Kate Sugarman, MD
Doctors for Camp Closure co leader
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