

**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,

My name is Thene Martin and I am a resident of Sandy Spring, Maryland, and a member of Pilgrim Church UCC, Action in Montgomery and the Maryland Just Power Alliance. I am writing in support of **HB711 – the Data Privacy Act**.

This matters to me because protecting the use of personal data by the government to the limited purpose for which it was collected encourages the submission of honest and complete information and facilitates trust.

I support HB711 because current loopholes in Maryland's privacy laws allow sensitive personal data collected by state agencies to be funneled to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through third-party data brokers, law enforcement data-sharing networks, and automated license plate readers. This turns state agencies into pipelines for federal immigration enforcement, undermining community trust, and endangering families.

Too many members of our community are afraid to leave their homes - to work, to shop, to pick up their children, to access healthcare - fearing that their personal information is being used to track their movements. Rather than going after "the worst of the worst," ICE agents are detaining law-abiding residents opportunistically based upon legal status. I believe that Maryland owes a duty of privacy to ALL residents and that sharing personal data for immigration purposes is a slippery slope that endangers everyone.

This bill closes those loopholes by preventing third parties from sharing driver data with ICE, stopping records requests from being used to target immigrants, and protecting geolocation and digital data from federal exploitation. These are commonsense reforms that ensure Maryland's privacy laws live up to their intended purpose. When personal data is misused, everyone's privacy is at risk—not just immigrants'. State agencies should be a shield, not a conduit, for ICE.

When people trust their government to uphold the law and protect their rights, everyone benefits. They are more productive, healthier, and engaged members of our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB711**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thene Martin