



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,

Silver Spring Justice Coalition offers favorable testimony in support of **HB711 – the Data Privacy Act**.

The Silver Spring Justice Coalition is an organization of community members, faith groups, and civil and human rights organizations from throughout Montgomery County that works to reduce the presence of police in our communities; eliminate violence and harm by police; establish transparency and accountability; and redirect public funds toward community needs.

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.

Our immigrant community is under siege by federal government actions. Places in Montgomery County that used to bustle are empty and quiet because immigrants (and some who might be perceived as immigrants) are afraid to venture out for fear of a chance encounter with federal officials or local law enforcement. Immigrants are having food delivered by local mutual aid groups, getting others to take their children to school (or keeping them home), setting up Standby Guardianship for their children in case the parents are detained or deported, and even afraid to answer their phones or open their door to anyone they do not know.

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.

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, the Silver Spring Justice Coalition urges the committee to issue a **favorable report on HB711**.

Sincerely,
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