

**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 Kelly Hodge-Williams, and I am a resident of Baltimore City, Maryland. I am writing to strongly urge your support of **HB711 – the Data Privacy Act**.

HB 711 closes dangerous gaps that currently allow sensitive personal information collected by Maryland agencies to be accessed through data brokers, law enforcement data-sharing networks, and automated systems in ways never intended by existing protections like the Driver Privacy Act, the Maryland Public Information Act, and the Maryland Online Data Privacy Act. When these loopholes are exploited, routine interactions with state government can be transformed into tools for immigration enforcement, eroding trust, endangering families, and discouraging residents from seeking essential services.

This legislation is critical not only for immigrant communities, but for every Marylander. Weak privacy safeguards enable mass data misuse, location tracking, and backdoor access to information that should never be weaponized against residents. By strengthening protections around driver data, public records requests, and geolocation and digital information, the Act ensures that state agencies serve as a shield for the public—not a conduit for federal overreach.

Passing the Data Privacy Act will restore trust in government, uphold the integrity of Maryland's privacy laws, and set a national standard that affirms a simple but essential principle: personal data collected to serve the public should never be used to surveil, target, or harm the very communities it is meant to support.

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Kelly Hodge-Williams*

5905 Charlesmead Avenue, Baltimore MD 21212