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**Testimony in Support of HB711- Favorable  
Data Privacy - Consumer Data, Public Records, Message Switching System (Data Privacy Act)**

**TO:** Chairman Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian and members of the Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Carol Stern

**I am testifying in favor of HB711 as a resident of Montgomery County's District 16 and a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda.**

My sacred text and tradition teach us to welcome the stranger, for we were strangers in the land of Egypt. Leviticus 19:34 explicitly instructs us to treat immigrants in our land the same as native citizens. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan wrote " teach us to respect the integrity of every human soul be it that of a friend or stranger, child or adult." When we are working to reform our immigration justice system, we must demand that it operates in accordance with these deeply held Jewish beliefs.

We know that ICE aggressively exploits government databases and private data brokers to track, detain, and deport Maryland residents. Although the General Assembly has taken steps to limit data sharing, glaring loopholes still leave families vulnerable. Expanding data privacy protections will shut down these pathways, stop the misuse of personal information, and ensure people can enroll their children in school, access healthcare, and apply for public benefits without fear of deportation. Protecting data privacy is essential to defending civil liberties and dignity for all Marylanders.

All Marylanders, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to equal protection under the law and deserve to be treated with human dignity. In the face of unprecedented attacks, our immigrant communities in Maryland along with CASA and other non-profits are doing everything they can to protect families and to advocate for their communities. Maryland has the power to stop enabling ICE's deportation machine and be a firewall against authoritarianism. This moment calls for action on the part of the State Legislature. To foster safety for our immigrant neighbors and for all Marylanders, please pass HB711.

**I respectfully urge a favorable report for HB711.**