
February 24, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 711 – Data Privacy – Consumer Data, Public Records, and Message Switching System (Data Privacy Act)

Dear Chair Valderrama and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 711 and provides the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Currently, MDOT processes Public Information Act (PIA) requests on a case-by-case basis in accordance with existing State law and established Departmental procedures. Under current law and practice, PIA staff are not permitted to require requesters state the purpose for which records are sought, and requests are processed without regard to the requester’s intended use of the information. Additionally, requesters do not have to provide their name.

If enacted, HB 711 would require PIA staff to take reasonable steps to determine whether a request seeks records for the purpose of immigration enforcement. This new requirement would be procedural in nature and could be incorporated into existing PIA workflows. After such a determination is made, requests would otherwise continue to be processed consistently with current PIA statutes and established Departmental practices.

However, the bill introduces a “reasonable steps” standard that is not defined in statute and may be subject to varying interpretation. Determining a requester’s intent may be challenging in practice, particularly where intent is not readily apparent or is based solely on the requester’s own representation. The absence of clear guidance regarding what constitutes reasonable verification may lead to inconsistent application across requests and staff.

As under existing law, the first two hours of staff time devoted to responding to a PIA request are provided at no cost to the requester. Staff time exceeding this threshold is charged to the requester unless a fee waiver is granted, in which case the associated costs are absorbed by the Transportation Trust Fund or the Maryland Transportation Authority Funds. HB 711 does not mandate new staffing, creation of a new program, or system modifications specific to MDOT. While the Department cannot reliably estimate the number of future requests that may implicate immigration enforcement, there is no indication that the volume or complexity of such requests would materially exceed current workloads. Accordingly, any additional effort associated with implementation could be absorbed using existing resources, resulting in no fiscal impact to MDOT.

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The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information as part of its deliberations on House Bill 711.

Respectfully submitted,

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