

Dear Members of the **Finance Committee**,

This testimony is submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice, in collaboration with CASA. I am a resident of **District 46**, and I am **testifying in support of SB504, the Data Privacy Act**.

This bill is critical in closing dangerous loopholes and limiting ICE's ability to access our state and local agency databases. It would prevent all Maryland state and local government agencies from releasing personal/private data to federal immigration officers without a judicial warrant. We shut down their access to MVA data in 2021, but the increasing aggression of the Trump administration's anti-immigrant campaign means that federal authorities are now targeting every kind of state database, from utilities to Medicaid.

The federal government's free use of state and local databases to track down immigrants creates a climate of fear in which immigrants and people of color are afraid or unable to seek services they are entitled to cooperate with any kind of authority, because they know that any information they provide will inevitably be weaponized by ICE. These databases don't even include immigration/citizenship data, which means that they can be combined with the total lack of oversight over immigration enforcement to allow targeting of people who have "foreign-sounding" names or live in particular areas. (As we've seen, ICE sweeps have been targeting anyone who looks Latino or has an accent.)

I had to accompany a close friend to renew her food stamps because although she is an American citizen, she is not white-passing and was afraid of what might happen. Now, apparently, she has to also worry that ICE will go snooping through Human Services' database and target her for "investigation." This is not the Maryland or the America I want to live in. We have a moral obligation to *not* contribute to this terror campaign, and that includes passive contributions like letting ICE freely access our private data.

By passing this bill, Maryland joins other states that have taken strong action: California Values Act (2017) and New York Green Light Law (2019) successfully cut off ICE access to state databases without a warrant. Furthermore, this legislation is legally sound, since federal law only restricts states from barring their own entities from sharing information about citizenship or immigration status, which the databases the bill seeks to protect do not contain.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote in support of SB504, the Data Privacy Act.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Keipper

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Baltimore, MD

Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore



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