

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB0504 – Data Privacy – Consumer Data, Public Records, and Message Switching System (Data Privacy Act)

Finance Committee

February 24, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gita Lefstein, and I am a resident of Baltimore County, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB0504, Data Privacy – Consumer Data, Public Records, and Message Switching System (Data Privacy Act).

Maryland has taken steps to protect people's private information, such as the Driver Privacy Act and the Maryland Online Data Privacy Act. However, more needs to be done. ICE is currently using every method they can to gather information on people. Other parts of the federal government have also been collecting information on people. A lot of that information targets immigrants and makes them have to live in fear. I have accompanied several immigrants to immigration related appointments. They are hard working people who have work permits and pay taxes and contribute to their communities. They are parents who are afraid for their children's safety. More than once a person whom I was accompanying was detained, breaking up a family and causing total disruption to their lives. The state needs to do all it can to prevent Marylanders from having to live in fear. We need to close all loopholes that permit people's private information to be accessed by ICE. Not only would that help immigrants, but it would help all of us. It is only a small step from gathering information to use against immigrants, to gathering information to use against protesters or anyone who does not agree with the government. This is already happening.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on SB0504.

Thank you.