

Testimony on Senate Bill 504 – Favorable  
SB504 – Data Privacy Act  
Finance Committee  
February 26, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jared Nielsen, and I am a resident of Baltimore, MD 21209. I am writing in support of SB504 – the Data Privacy Act.

I work in the technology sector, which means I have a clear-eyed view of how personal data is collected, aggregated, and monetized — and it is rarely in the interest of the people it was collected from. The default is for that data to be sold to the highest bidder, not protected. Our lives are now inseparable from digital tools. We depend on them for communication, employment, healthcare, and civic participation. That dependency makes robust data privacy not a luxury, but a necessity — especially for communities that cannot afford paid services, which typically offer stronger privacy controls. Free and low-cost services disproportionately harvest and expose user data, which means lower-income communities bear the greatest privacy risks. Data privacy is an equity issue.

I support SB504 because current loopholes in Maryland's privacy laws allow sensitive personal data collected by state agencies to be funneled to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through third-party data brokers, law enforcement data-sharing networks, and automated license plate readers. This turns state agencies into pipelines for federal immigration enforcement, undermining community trust and endangering families. I have immigrant neighbors in Baltimore. They are part of the fabric of this city. When they are afraid to use public services, seek healthcare, or engage with local government because they fear their data will be used against them, that fear does not stay contained — it erodes trust in institutions for everyone.

This bill closes those loopholes by preventing third parties from sharing driver data with ICE, stopping records requests from being used to target immigrants, and protecting geolocation and digital data from federal exploitation. These are commonsense reforms that ensure Maryland's privacy laws live up to their intended purpose. When personal data is misused, everyone's privacy is at risk — not just immigrants'. State agencies should be a shield, not a conduit, for ICE.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB504.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jared Nielsen  
Baltimore, MD 21209