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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 0264 - Maryland Data Privacy and Protection Act of 2026  
2/10/2026

TO: Chair Melissa Wells & Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections  
Committee  
FROM: Jess Hencke

Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Jess Hencke, I live in Columbia, Maryland, and I am writing to support HB 0264, the Maryland Data Privacy and Protection Act of 2026.

One has always been cautioned about account security - don't write your passwords down on a sticky note on your monitor, don't share your passwords with anyone, use a password manager, etc. Will this matter if companies are selling our data to anyone willing to pay for it? As "cyberpunk dystopia" as that sounds, it happens every day. The website [haveibeenpwned.com](https://haveibeenpwned.com) indicates that 17,431,283,012 accounts have been hacked - I would bet that yours, committee members, and mine, are included. But who needs to hack your account to get your information when all of our data are commodities to be bought and sold.

Recently, communities in Columbia had "cop carts" out by a playground and in some parking lots. Those private companies now have video footage of the license plate numbers, the faces of children, and every one of our neighbors shopping in the area. Members of the community board were urged to remove them, because even if the company "promises" in good faith not to sell that data - one password on a sticky note and all those kids' faces are sent to god knows where. Let's at least make the *purposeful selling* of this data prohibited in our state!

I urge you to support HB 0264 and help protect us from unnecessary privacy violations by private companies just looking to make bank, lest liberty and justice for all be lost.