



# News Release

## Comptroller Lierman Testifies in Support Alterations to Maryland Data Privacy Act

*Prior to Senate hearing, Comptroller Lierman joined Senate sponsor, supporters and immigrant community members to advocate for SB 977*

**ANNAPOLIS, Md. (February 19, 2025)** — Today, **Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman** testified before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee in support of [Senate Bill 977](#)-State and Local Agencies – Enforcement of Federal Immigration Law – Restrictions on Access to Information (Maryland Data Privacy Act).

SB 977 would alter certain provisions of law to require a law enforcement agency or a unit of State or Local government to:

- Deny access to certain databases, facilities, or buildings by certain individuals seeking access for the purpose of enforcing federal immigration law, under certain circumstances.
- Require the Attorney General to enforce certain provisions of the Act, and,
- Provide that a State employee who violates certain provisions of the Act is subject to certain discipline.

Prior to the hearing, Comptroller Lierman joined supporters and members of the immigrant community at a press conference to share their concerns and fears about their personal and confidential data being compromised and to support SB 977 at Lawyers Mall outside the Maryland State House. CASA, an organization that advocates for immigrants, organized the press conference.

“As the Comptroller of Maryland, I work to ensure that taxpayer information is handled securely, with integrity, and is used solely for tax purposes. If Marylanders don’t feel safe filling out forms needed to pay their taxes, we may lose an integral part of our workforce and miss important and needed revenue. I am proud to lend my voice to support SB977, which will ensure units of state government, including my agency, will not share sensitive information with federal immigration authorities without a warrant.”

At the Senate hearing that followed, Comptroller Lierman offered these remarks:

*“Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, members of the Committee, thank you for having me today. For the record, I am Comptroller Brooke Lierman, and I am here to speak in support of Senate Bill 977, the Maryland Data Privacy Act.*

*“As Comptroller, we work to ensure that every Maryland resident who owes taxes, pays them – and only pays what they owe. When everyone chips in, then we have the resources we need to ensure we can build and maintain schools, roads, health services, infrastructure, and more. Therefore, we aim to optimize our processes so that when Marylanders complete an employer withholding form or submit their tax returns, they feel secure that their sensitive information will not be used for non-tax purposes without their consent. This is incredibly important – if people don’t feel safe, they simply won’t file, and the whole state will suffer as a result.*

*“Maryland’s international community represents a major component of our economy. My office published a report last year that took a look at the role immigration has on our state’s economy, and I want to highlight a few key figures. Immigrants in Maryland make up more than 20% of our civilian labor force. In 2022 alone, they contributed \$5.3 billion in state and local taxes, over \$6 billion to social services programs such as Social Security and Medicare, and had overall spending power of \$37 billion.*

*“It’s so important to us that we remove any barrier or obstacle of fear that immigrants may have that complying with our state tax laws could put them and their families at risk. We want to encourage compliance with our tax laws. One way we can keep doing that is to make sure that we can let our immigrant community members know that their data is safe with us and that unless somebody comes with a warrant issued by a court, we will hold their data safe.*

*“As an employer of 1,200 members of Team Comptroller, this is also helpful guidance for us as an agency to know how to react when we get these types of phishing requests, so we know what to do. The only way to do that is to put it in state statute. We wouldn’t want the secretary of one agency reacting to these requests in a different way than another state agency does. And so to have uniformity across the state it is important to pass a bill like this.”*

Comptroller Lierman urged a favorable report on SB 977 and thanked the bill’s sponsor, Sen. Clarence Lam, D-12, Baltimore and Howard counties, and CASA and other supporters.

Last April, to gain a better understanding of the impact immigrants have on Maryland’s workforce and economy, the Comptroller’s Office released a report, [Immigration and the Economy](#), as part of the agency’s State of the Economy series. Key findings in the report included:

- Maryland’s population and labor force have a larger percentage of immigrants than neighboring states and the U.S. overall, making up 16.7 percent of the state’s population and 21.1 percent of the labor force.

- The vast majority of immigrants in Maryland enter the U.S. legally under visas or other lawful non-citizen statuses, with just over a million foreign-born residents.
- Immigrants have a significantly higher labor force participation rate than U.S.-born Marylanders. However, the economic potential for immigrant populations is constrained due to restrictions in key industries for the state's economy.
- International migration is offsetting large declines in domestic migration and natural population growth rates in Maryland. As of 2022, immigrants represented 16.7 percent of Maryland's population.
- The top five countries of origin for immigrants in Maryland are: El Salvador (11.7%), India (6.3%), China (4.7%), Nigeria (4.7%), and Guatemala ((4%).
- The three Maryland counties with the highest immigrant populations are Montgomery County (32.5%), Prince George's County (22.5%), and Howard County (20.9).

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