

Testimony of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC) In Support of LD 1822

An Act to Enact the Maine Online Data Privacy Act

Public Hearing: May 5, 2025, 10:00 AM

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Ruben Torres and I serve as the Advocacy, Communications, and Policy Manager for the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC). MIRC represents more than 100 organizations across Maine, including grassroots immigrant-led organizations, legal service providers, housing advocates, and direct service agencies, working collectively to improve the economic and social standing of Maine's immigrant communities, thereby uplifting the state as a whole. We are testifying in strong **support** of LD 1822, An Act to Enact the Maine Online Data Privacy Act.

This bill would establish essential rights for Mainers in the digital age, granting consumers the ability to access, correct, and control how their personal data is collected, processed, and shared. It holds companies to higher standards for transparency, data minimization, and consent, and crucially, it bans the sale of sensitive personal data outright. This means explicit protections for sensitive data, such as: racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, consumer health data, sex life, sexual orientation, citizenship or immigration status, genetic data or biometric data, personal data of a consumer the controller knows to be a child, and precise geolocation data.

In today's data economy, every digital interaction, whether it's going to the grocery store, paying a utility bill, or simply using a smartphone, can generate data that is commodified, shared, and weaponized. Our community members interact with public agencies, employers, landlords, health providers, and social media platforms every day. Often without knowing that behind those interactions, their personal data is being mined, resold, and used to track them. In a world where data is currency, non-citizens have become an especially lucrative target.

When personal data is harvested and repackaged for commercial or law enforcement purposes, it creates a climate of fear in all communities. It restricts people from accessing essential services, reporting abuse, or participating in civic life. We know from firsthand accounts in Maine that immigrants avoid accessing health care, education, and even emergency assistance because they fear where their information will end up.

If you wouldn't feel comfortable telling a stranger about personal private information, we must ask: why should corporations be allowed to profit from that same information. LD 1822 builds civil rights protections for all of Maine in the digital era. For these reasons we ask the committee vote **Ought to Pass** on LD 1822. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Ruben Torres
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