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Carroll and Howard Counties

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair, Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology
and Biotechnology



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB895 - Maryland Technology Internship Program - Units of State Government

Position: Favorable with Amendments

February 26th, 2020,

Chairman Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of SB895. The Maryland Technology Internship Program offers financial assistance to technology-based businesses in the State of Maryland, as well as state and local governmental agencies, to hire more interns. Administered by UMBC, this program helps the State retain some of the top talent being trained in our incredible academic institutions. However, our State agencies rarely see this top talent matriculate to public service - a problem this bill seeks to correct.

The current MTIP program requires that an organization provide a 50/50 match to the contribution of the State to fund an intern through the program. This model makes plenty of sense with respect to private industry and localities, but is less logical with respect to state agencies.

When a state agency matches the contribution of the State of Maryland, the entirety of those funds originate at the state level. Under this model, state agencies are required to use funds we as a body have not allocated, to fund MTIP interns. For the few state agencies that are able to do so, they often do not have the funding to keep interns through the fall and spring semesters. As a result, our State agencies spend the small amount of funds they are able to allocate on temporary interns who they spend resources training, and then lose to other employers in the IT, cybersecurity, and technology space.

This bill rectifies this issue by having the state fund the entirety of an intern's stipend, if that intern is working with a state agency. This bill also provides enough funding to the program for interns working with State agencies to start in the Summer, stay with our state agencies through the fall, and graduate from their internship in the Spring - all while providing intern stipends that keep the program competitive with private sector participants. Providing State agencies with the ability to align their internships with the academic cycle not only allows them to utilize the fantastic, cost-effective work of interns for a longer period of time, but also allows State agencies to be more effective in recruiting students into technology, IT, and cybersecurity based roles with State agencies. This model of recruitment has proven extremely effective for some of the private sector employers in the tech industry, and facilitating the adoption of this model of recruitment would bring our State agencies into alignment with industry standards.

Included with this bill you will find a sponsor amendment that makes a series of changes to the bill, including:

- Technical changes to the wording of the bill to improve clarity.
- Removing references to specific payment amounts in order to provide flexibility to the ways in which UMBC is able to administer the program for individual students.
- Removing references to reimbursement to ensure that the State is able to directly fund student stipends, as opposed to requiring State agencies to provide funding up front that they do not have.

As you will see in the testimony provided by UMBC and students who have benefited from the program, the Maryland Technology Internship Program has been incredibly successful in educating students, and turning the academic success of our universities into the economic success of our businesses. This common sense bill expands those benefits to the State through sensible changes to the way in which we fund interns in State agencies. **For that reason I respectfully request a favorable report for SB895.**

Sincerely,



Senator Katie Fry Hester
Howard and Carroll Counties