

February 17, 2020

Mr. Errol C. Ehrhardt  
10 Redfield Court  
Nottingham, MD 21236

Greetings Honorable Members of the Maryland House Judiciary Committee,

The reason for my letter to you all today is to relay my support for Delegate Cox' HB 635, relating to crimes involving Malware and Ransomware. I would ask for your support of this crucial bill as well! My background in the Information Technology industry is extensive, with over 30 years personal IT experience, and over 10 years professional IT experience. I've worked with multiple individual people, as well as with organizations like Honeywell International, Capgemini North America, and Harford County Public Schools, and I have seen firsthand the destruction wrought by Malware and Ransomware to unsuspecting individuals, schools, and organizations as a whole.

The purposes of these types of attacks are usually monetary, informational, and for generally disruptive purposes. Honestly, this is the price we pay for relying so heavily on Technology. There is a saying within the industry, the only truly secured computer is one that's not attached to the Internet. Unfortunately, there is a lot of truth in this statement. But, what have we as a State, as a Country done to secure our Corporate, School, and Infrastructure networks proactively? Unfortunately, not much at all.

When teachers and employees unknowingly bring in an infected CD or USB drive that takes down a school or other corporate network, that's a major problem. It's not their fault their CD or USB drive was infected, but it was someone's, somewhere. So, I ask again, what are we doing about it proactively? Answer is, unfortunately not much, and not enough. HB 635 is designed to hold those within the State of Maryland that would commit computer crimes with Malware or Ransomware, accountable for their actions.

It is my hope that HB 635 will start a proactive discussion within the State of Maryland, that will be carried over to the National level. What will it take before it's too late? What will it take for us to properly secure our networks, and our Infrastructure? Will it be a city-wide or state-wide power outage? Will it be traffic lights going berserk and causing accidents? Or, will it be our hospitals losing the ability to treat patients? What will it take before it's too late? How much data are we willing to lose before it's too late? How many people are we willing to lose before it's too late?

I urge this body to seriously consider and pass HB 635, and to start the desperately needed proactive discussions to secure our School, Corporate, Health, and Infrastructure networks before it's too late.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Errol C. Ehrhardt