



House Bill 1205

*State Government – Information Technology and Cybersecurity–Related Infrastructure
(Modernize Maryland Act of 2022)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: March 29, 2022

From: Dominic J. Butchko

A strong partnership between the State and local governments is essential for safeguarding critical infrastructure and defending against increasingly complex cyber risks. MACo urges the General Assembly to provide a meaningful and lasting State commitment to bolster cybersecurity and prioritize cyber resilience through collaborative efforts to identify, protect against, detect, and respond to malicious cyber threats.

Hackers are increasingly targeting states and local governments with sophisticated cyberattacks. Securing government information systems is critical, as a cyber intrusion can be very disruptive, jeopardizing sensitive information, public safety, and the delivery of essential services.

MACo advocates for the State to offer shared service agreements, 24/7 network monitoring, real-time incident response, statewide risk assessments, and a dedicated cybersecurity support fund to help local governments upgrade IT infrastructure. This will ensure an equitable approach to cyber preparedness and resilience across the state.

Legacy systems — outdated digital software or hardware — are generally unable to interact with any newer systems or implement necessary cybersecurity measures to safeguard critical data and sensitive information. As such, MACo urges the State to prioritize updating outdated technology platforms, which is vital for reducing cybersecurity risks, enhancing service delivery, and boosting government transparency and accountability.

Rising cyber liability insurance premiums and fewer insurance carriers have left counties facing difficulty acquiring and renewing coverage by leveraging its purchasing power. MACo believes the State can provide an affordable solution to ensure local governments remain cyber resilient in times of crisis.

By dedicating needed resources and streamlining collaboration, communication, and coordination, the State can help lead local governments, school systems, and critical infrastructure toward a more cyber-secure future.

The work of the Ad Hoc Committee on State and Local Cybersecurity of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council embodied this spirit in its report. The referenced bills deserve continued stakeholder attention to coalesce behind similar principles. MACo and its member counties stand ready to collaborate to develop a cohesive statutory framework to advance these mutual State/local goals, and request a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** on HB 1205.