

Having navigated a massive cyberattack and its recovery, I can attest to the impact these events have on school systems. SB0601(HB0957) seeks to spotlight standards and practices to mitigate cybersecurity risks.

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) within the State of Maryland sit in a unique spot between a local and state agency. When laws are enacted, the term state agency is often used to define its scope. In the past, this has sometimes left in question whether or not LEAs were included. In my opinion, SB0601 clearly defines requirements for cybersecurity specific to LEAs. Given the potential instructional impact, scope of stored data, and impact on public confidence, required minimum specifications must be in place to maximize the security protecting these LEA aspects.

While much of these requirements are implied or hinted at in other legislation, SB0601 focuses a spotlight on the requirements of LEAs to protect their technology ecosystems, leaving no question that cybersecurity has moved past best practices and to essential to operations of the LEA.

This bill will put in place requirements for the essential security practices that would have most likely prevented the attack I experienced and the year of hard-fought recovery I led. Technology is no longer a nice to have feature in education. It permeates every aspect of the school day. This bill acknowledges this and puts in place reasonable expectations for LEAs to meet. For these reasons, I support SB0601(HB0957) as written.

Jim Corns