



Wes Moore | Governor  
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor  
Katie Savage | Secretary

**TO:** House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
**FROM:** Department of Information Technology  
**RE:** House Bill 262 - State Government - Council for Open Data - Membership and Responsibilities  
**DATE:** January 27, 2026  
**POSITION:** Support

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The Honorable Melissa Wells, Chair  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
145 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Wells,

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 262 - State Government - Council for Open Data - Membership and Responsibilities, the Department of Information Technology's departmental bill before the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee.

The Maryland Council on Open Data was established by the Open Data Act to coordinate, and advocate for the State's open data policy, with the goal of promoting transparency, improving accountability, and enhancing government performance by ensuring that State data is accurate, up to date, and publicly available. Over the years, the Council has played an important role in increasing access to data for State agencies, local governments, the private sector, and Maryland residents.

However, the Council's current structure limits its ability to fully meet today's data needs. Limited representation from local governments and external partners in academia and the private sector has made it more difficult to collaborate effectively and expand open data efforts statewide. In addition, the Council's focus has historically been centered on technical open data portals, rather than broader priorities such as partnerships, public engagement, and alignment with the State's overall data governance strategy. The absence of a formal leadership role for the State Chief Data Officer has also made coordination across state agencies more challenging.

House Bill 262 addresses these challenges by modernizing the Council's membership, better aligning it with Maryland's data governance framework, and expanding its mission. The bill transforms the Council to include a broader range of voices, including representatives from local governments, the private sector, academia, and nonprofit organizations. Importantly, it



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designates the State Chief Data Officer as a permanent member and Chair of the Council, strengthening coordination across state agencies and ensuring alignment with statewide data governance efforts.

The bill also expands the Council's responsibilities, allowing it to advise on statewide data initiatives and priorities, foster stronger partnerships with communities and service organizations, and better integrate open data practices into State technology planning and procurement. As Maryland continues to reduce barriers to discovering, analyzing, and using data, these changes help ensure that open data is not only accessible but used responsibly and strategically to support transparency, innovation, and sound public policy.

Finally, for the Committee's awareness, the Maryland Department of Information Technology has submitted a proposed amendment to Committee Counsel that we respectfully request be included in the bill.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Information Technology respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 262.

Best,

Katie Savage  
Secretary  
Department of Information Technology