

HOUSE BILL 593

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6lr0759
CF SB 482

By: **Delegates Hill, Boyce, Guzzone, Moreno, and Smith**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 18, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety**
3 **Answering Point**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from intentionally, willfully, and without
5 authorization committing a certain act with the intent to interrupt or impair the
6 functioning of critical infrastructure; prohibiting a person from intentionally,
7 willfully, and without authorization committing a certain act that denies access to
8 an authorized user of or interrupts or impairs the functioning of critical
9 infrastructure or a public safety answering point; and generally relating to
10 interference with critical infrastructure or a public safety answering point.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Criminal Law
13 Section 7–302(a), (c), and (d)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Criminal Law**

19 7–302.

20 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (2) “Access” means to instruct, communicate with, store data in, retrieve or
2 intercept data from, or otherwise use the resources of a computer program, computer
3 system, or computer network.

4 (3) (i) “Aggregate amount” means a direct loss of property or services
5 incurred by a victim.

6 (ii) “Aggregate amount” includes:

7 1. the value of any money, property, or service lost, stolen, or
8 rendered unrecoverable by the crime; or

9 2. any actual reasonable expenditure incurred by the victim
10 to verify whether a computer program, computer, computer system, or computer network
11 was altered, acquired, damaged, deleted, disrupted, or destroyed by access in violation of
12 this section.

13 (4) (i) “Computer” means an electronic, magnetic, optical, organic, or
14 other data processing device or system that performs logical, arithmetic, memory, or
15 storage functions.

16 (ii) “Computer” includes property, a data storage facility, or a
17 communications facility that is directly related to or operated with a computer.

18 (iii) “Computer” does not include an automated typewriter, a
19 typesetter, or a portable calculator.

20 (5) “Computer control language” means ordered statements that direct a
21 computer to perform specific functions.

22 (6) “Computer database” means a representation of information,
23 knowledge, facts, concepts, or instructions that:

24 (i) is intended for use in a computer, computer system, or computer
25 network; and

26 (ii) 1. is being prepared or has been prepared in a formalized
27 manner; or

28 2. is being produced or has been produced by a computer,
29 computer system, or computer network.

30 (7) “Computer network” means the interconnection of one or more
31 computers through:

32 (i) the use of a satellite, microwave, line, or other communication

1 medium; and

2 (ii) terminals or a complex consisting of two or more interconnected
3 computers regardless of whether the interconnection is continuously maintained.

4 (8) "Computer program" means an ordered set of instructions or
5 statements that may interact with related data and, when executed in a computer system,
6 causes a computer to perform specified functions.

7 (9) "Computer services" includes computer time, data processing, and
8 storage functions.

9 (10) "Computer software" means a computer program, instruction,
10 procedure, or associated document regarding the operation of a computer system.

11 (11) "Computer system" means one or more connected or unconnected
12 computers, peripheral devices, computer software, data, or computer programs.

13 (12) **"CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE" MEANS SYSTEMS AND ASSETS,
14 WHETHER PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL, THAT ARE SO VITAL TO THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR
15 A MUNICIPALITY THAT THE INCAPACITY OR DESTRUCTION OF ONE OR MORE
16 COMPONENTS WOULD HAVE A DEBILITATING IMPACT ON:**

17 (I) **PUBLIC SECURITY;**

18 (II) **ECONOMIC SECURITY;**

19 (III) **PUBLIC HEALTH;**

20 (IV) **PUBLIC SAFETY;**

21 (V) **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION; OR**

22 (VI) **PUBLIC UTILITIES.**

23 (13) "Ransomware" means a computer or data contaminant, encryption, or
24 lock that:

25 (i) is placed or introduced without authorization into a computer, a
26 computer network, or a computer system; and

27 (ii) restricts access by an authorized person to a computer, computer
28 data, a computer network, or a computer system in a manner that results in the person
29 responsible for the placement or introduction of the contaminant, encryption, or lock
30 demanding payment of money or other consideration to remove the contaminant,
31 encryption, or lock.

1 (c) (1) A person may not intentionally, willfully, and without authorization:

2 (i) access, attempt to access, cause to be accessed, or exceed the
3 person's authorized access to all or part of a computer network, computer control language,
4 computer, computer software, computer system, computer service, or computer database;
5 or

6 (ii) copy, attempt to copy, possess, or attempt to possess the contents
7 of all or part of a computer database accessed in violation of item (i) of this paragraph.

8 (2) A person may not commit an act prohibited by paragraph (1) of this
9 subsection with the intent to:

10 (i) cause the malfunction or interrupt the operation of all or any part
11 of a computer, computer network, computer control language, computer software, computer
12 system, computer service, or computer data; or

13 (ii) alter, damage, or destroy all or any part of data or a computer
14 program stored, maintained, or produced by a computer, computer network, computer
15 software, computer system, computer service, or computer database.

16 (3) A person may not intentionally, willfully, and without authorization:

17 (i) possess, identify, or attempt to identify a valid access code; or

18 (ii) publicize or distribute a valid access code to an unauthorized
19 person.

20 (4) A person may not commit an act prohibited under this subsection with
21 the intent to interrupt or impair the functioning of:

22 (i) the State government;

23 (ii) a service, device, or system related to the production,
24 transmission, delivery, or storage of electricity or natural gas in the State that is owned,
25 operated, or controlled by a person other than a public service company, as defined in §
26 1–101 of the Public Utilities Article;

27 (iii) a service provided in the State by a public service company, as
28 defined in § 1–101 of the Public Utilities Article;

29 (iv) a health care facility, as defined in § 18–338.1 of the
30 Health – General Article; or

31 (v) a public school, as defined in § 1–101 of the Education Article.

1 (5) (i) This paragraph does not apply to a person who has a bona fide
2 scientific, educational, governmental, testing, news, or other similar justification for
3 possessing ransomware.

4 (ii) A person may not knowingly possess ransomware with the intent
5 to use the ransomware for the purpose of introduction into the computer, computer
6 network, or computer system of another person without the authorization of the other
7 person.

8 (6) A person may not **INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT**
9 **AUTHORIZATION** commit an act prohibited under this subsection with the intent to
10 interrupt or impair the functioning of **CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR** a public safety
11 answering point, as defined in § 1-301 of the Public Safety Article.

12 **(7) A PERSON MAY NOT INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT**
13 **AUTHORIZATION COMMIT AN ACT PROHIBITED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION THAT**
14 **DENIES ACCESS TO AN AUTHORIZED USER OF OR INTERRUPTS OR IMPAIRS THE**
15 **FUNCTIONING OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR A PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING**
16 **POINT, AS DEFINED IN § 1-301 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE.**

17 (d) (1) A person who violates subsection (c)(1) of this section is guilty of a
18 misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine
19 not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

20 (2) A person who violates subsection (c)(2) or (3) of this section:

21 (i) if the aggregate amount of the loss is \$10,000 or more, is guilty
22 of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not
23 exceeding \$10,000 or both; or

24 (ii) if the aggregate amount of the loss is less than \$10,000, is guilty
25 of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a
26 fine not exceeding \$5,000 or both.

27 (3) A person who violates subsection (c)(4) of this section:

28 (i) if the aggregate amount of the loss is \$10,000 or more, is guilty
29 of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not
30 exceeding \$100,000 or both; or

31 (ii) if the aggregate amount of the loss is less than \$10,000, is guilty
32 of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a
33 fine not exceeding \$25,000 or both.

1 (4) A person who violates subsection (c)(5) of this section is guilty of a
2 misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine
3 not exceeding \$5,000 or both.

4 (5) A person who violates subsection (c)(6) of this section is guilty of a felony
5 and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding
6 \$25,000 or both.

7 (6) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES SUBSECTION (C)(7) OF THIS SECTION IS
8 GUILTY OF A FELONY AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT
9 EXCEEDING 10 YEARS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$50,000 OR BOTH.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.