

# SENATE BILL 597

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By: Senator Hester

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Higher Education – Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the Cyber Warrior Diversity Program to include training  
4 students in artificial intelligence; establishing the Maryland Artificial Intelligence  
5 Partnership in the University System of Maryland to provide a single nexus for  
6 certain stakeholders in artificial intelligence initiatives to advance artificial  
7 intelligence in the State by carrying out certain duties; establishing the Artificial  
8 Intelligence Incubation Lab in the University System of Maryland to assist State  
9 agencies to accelerate the responsible use of artificial intelligence by carrying out  
10 certain duties; requiring the Department of Information Technology to provide  
11 certain guidance and support to the Lab; requiring the Center for Equitable Artificial  
12 Intelligence and Machine Learning Systems at Morgan State University to support  
13 State agencies on certain uses of artificial intelligence by carrying out certain  
14 research; renaming the Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship Program to be the  
15 Emerging Technology Public Service Scholarship Program; adding artificial  
16 intelligence to the scope of eligibility for the Scholarship Program; and generally  
17 relating to developing the use of artificial intelligence in the State.

18 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

19 Article – Education

20 Section 11–1402, 18–3501(c), 18–3502, 18–3503(b)(2), (f)(2), and (g), and  
21 18–3504(a)(1) and (b)(2)

22 Annotated Code of Maryland

23 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

24 BY adding to

25 Article – Education

26 Section 12–124, 12–125, and 14–111

27 Annotated Code of Maryland

28 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
2 Article – Education  
3 Section 14–101(c), 18–3501(a), and 18–3503(b)(1)  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

6 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
7 Article – State Finance and Procurement  
8 Section 3.5–806(a) and (b)  
9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
10 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 BY adding to  
12 Article – State Finance and Procurement  
13 Section 3.5–806(f)  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
17 Article – State Finance and Procurement  
18 Section 3.5–806(f)  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

21 Preamble

22 WHEREAS, Artificial intelligence is expected to transform every sector of the  
23 economy, create new industries, and significantly expand economic output, thus making  
24 artificial intelligence skill development and workforce readiness essential for Maryland's  
25 future competitiveness; and

26 WHEREAS, Broad deployment of artificial intelligence tools will generate demand  
27 for new technical and analytical skills, thus creating opportunities for high–paying jobs and  
28 career pathways that require education and retraining across industries; and

29 WHEREAS, The federal AI Action Plan prioritizes expanded artificial intelligence  
30 literacy and training to help workers successfully transition into artificial  
31 intelligence–driven roles; and

32 WHEREAS, Coordinated efforts to build robust artificial intelligence ecosystems,  
33 including strategic public–private partnerships and access to training resources, are  
34 essential to foster innovation and economic growth; and

35 WHEREAS, The federal AI Action Plan calls for expanding access to critical  
36 computing resources, removing barriers to innovation, and strengthening U.S. leadership  
37 in artificial intelligence research and development; and

1        WHEREAS, Aligning State strategies with national goals, such as enhancing  
2 workforce development in emerging technology fields, accelerating artificial intelligence  
3 adoption in public and private sectors, and expanding opportunities for artificial  
4 intelligence education and training, will support Maryland's economic development and  
5 position the State as a leader in the future economy; now, therefore,

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

## Article – Education

9 11-1402.

(a) There is a Cyber Warrior Diversity Program at:

(1) Baltimore City Community College;

(2) Bowie State University;

(3) Coppin State University;

(4) Morgan State University;

(5) The University of Maryland Eastern Shore; and

(6) The University of Maryland Baltimore County Training Centers that  
in the State.

(b) The purpose of each Program is to train students in computer networking, cybersecurity, **AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**.

20 (c) The governing entity at each institution is responsible for administering the  
21 Program at that institution.

22 (d) On or before July 1 each year, beginning in 2024, the Commission, in  
23 consultation with the Cybersecurity Association of Maryland, Inc., shall, if applicable,  
24 expand the Program to accommodate any changes in certification trends identified under §  
25 10-496 of the Economic Development Article.

26 12-124.

27 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
28 INDICATED.

29 (2) "HUB" MEANS A MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION HUB.

3 (4) "PLAN" MEANS THE MARYLAND STATE ARTIFICIAL  
4 INTELLIGENCE STRATEGIC PLAN.

5 (B) (1) THERE IS A MARYLAND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
6 PARTNERSHIP IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND.

11 (3) THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL:

12 (I) CONNECT, ACCELERATE, AND SCALE ARTIFICIAL  
13 INTELLIGENCE INITIATIVES;

22 (v) ESTABLISH MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION HUBS IN  
23 ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION.

24 (4) IN CARRYING OUT THE POWERS AND DUTIES GRANTED UNDER  
25 THIS SECTION, THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL WORK IN CONSULTATION AND  
26 COLLABORATION WITH:

27 (I) STATE AGENCIES:

28 (III) INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE:

#### (IV) THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS.

**(5) THERE IS A DIRECTOR IN THE PARTNERSHIP.**

3 (C) (1) (I) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2026, THE PARTNERSHIP  
4 SHALL DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN.

5 (II) THE PLAN SHALL INCLUDE METRICS FOR THE CORE AREAS  
6 OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE LITERACY, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS  
7 DEVELOPMENT, AND RESEARCH AND INNOVATION.

(2) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2027, AND EACH DECEMBER 1 THEREAFTER, THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL SUBMIT A PROGRESS REPORT ON ACHIEVING THE PLAN.

13 (I) THE GOVERNOR; AND

14 (II) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE  
15 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

16 (D) (1) (I) THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
17 MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, ESTABLISH MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY  
18 EXTENSION HUBS IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS.

19 (II) THE HUBS SHALL PRIORITIZE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
20 BUT MAY BROADEN TO ADDITIONAL SECTORS AS APPROPRIATE.

24 (I) ACT AS A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT TO CONNECT SMALL  
25 BUSINESSES WITH CRITICAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESOURCES;

26 (II) PARTNER WITH ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING A  
27 COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LOCAL EMPLOYERS, SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS, AND  
28 COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS;

4 (IV) PROVIDE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS TRAINING TO  
5 INDIVIDUALS AT NO CHARGE, INCLUDING THROUGH COURSES AND  
6 CREDIT-BEARING CREDENTIALS.

7 12-125.

8           (A) IN THIS SECTION, "LAB" MEANS THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
9 INCUBATION LAB.

10 (B) (1) THERE IS AN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INCUBATION LAB IN  
11 THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND.

18 (I) SUPPORT STATE AGENCIES TO:

### 3. DEVELOP PROTOTYPES AND PROOFS OF CONCEPTS FOR MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

1 GROUND FOR EXPERIMENTATION OF HOW TO APPLY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
2 TECHNOLOGY WITHIN STATE AGENCIES.

3 (C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SHALL  
4 PROVIDE POLICY GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATING THE WORK OF THE  
5 LAB INTO STATE AGENCIES.

6 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MAY  
7 PROVIDE FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LAB.

8 14-101.

9 (c) (1) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

10 (2) "Board of Regents" means the Board of Regents of Morgan State  
11 University.

12 (3) "University" means Morgan State University.

13 14-111.

14 (A) THE CENTER FOR EQUITABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
15 MACHINE LEARNING SYSTEMS AT THE UNIVERSITY SHALL SERVE AS A STATEWIDE  
16 RESOURCE AND COORDINATING HUB TO SUPPORT STATE AGENCIES ON THE  
17 PRODUCTIVE, SECURE, AND ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE  
18 STATE.

19 (B) (1) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE GOVERNOR'S  
20 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SUBCABINET ESTABLISHED UNDER § 3.5-806 OF THE  
21 STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE MAY REQUEST THAT THE CENTER  
22 FOR EQUITABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MACHINE LEARNING SYSTEMS  
23 COMPLETE A RESEARCH REQUEST THAT THE CENTER SHALL COORDINATE AND  
24 LEAD, COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS AS NEEDED.

25 (2) THE CENTER FOR EQUITABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
26 MACHINE LEARNING SYSTEMS SHALL:

27 (I) COORDINATE AND LEAD THE RESEARCH;

28 (II) COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ENTITIES AS NEEDED;

29 (III) SUMMARIZE THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED; AND

1 (IV) SUMMARIZE ANY CONCLUSIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS  
2 RESULTING FROM THE RESEARCH.

10 (II) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE  
11 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY,  
12 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND BIOTECHNOLOGY ESTABLISHED UNDER §  
13 2-10A-13 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

14 18-3501.

15 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

16 (c) "Program" means the [Cybersecurity] EMERGING TECHNOLOGY Public  
17 Service Scholarship Program.

18 18-3502.

19 (a) There is a scholarship program known as the [Cybersecurity] **EMERGING**  
20 **TECHNOLOGY** Public Service Scholarship Program in the State.

21 (b) The purpose of the Program is to support students who are pursuing an  
22 education in programs that [are] **PROVIDE CORE SKILLS** directly relevant to cybersecurity  
23 **OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**

24 18-3503.

25 (b) An individual may apply to the Office for a scholarship under this subtitle if  
26 the individual:

27 (1) Is eligible for in-State tuition;

28 (2) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, is a student who:

29 (i) Is enrolled full-time at an eligible institution in an approved  
30 degree or certificate program that is directly relevant to cybersecurity **OR ARTIFICIAL**  
31 **INTELLIGENCE**; and

1 (ii) Is within 3 years of graduation from the individual's degree or  
2 certificate program;

3 (f) (2) Each recipient of a scholarship under this subtitle may hold the award  
4 for 6 years if the recipient:

5 (i) Is a part-time student;

(iii) Continues to be a student at the institution and takes at least 6 semester hours of courses each semester leading to a degree or certificate that is directly relevant to cybersecurity **OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**.

11       (g) The Department shall provide information on the Program to high school  
12 students who participate in career and technology education programs related to  
13 cybersecurity **OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**

14 18-3504.

18 (i) Work in the State in the cybersecurity OR ARTIFICIAL  
19 INTELLIGENCE field for a:

21 B. Public high school; or

22 C. Community college; or

23 2. Unit of:

24 A. State government;

25 B. County government; or

26 C. City or municipal government; or

27 (ii) Teach in the State in an education program that is directly  
28 relevant to cybersecurity **OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** in:

29 1. A public high school; or

1                   2.     A community college.

2                   (b)    In accordance with § 18–112 of this title, a scholarship recipient shall repay  
3 the Commission the funds received under this subtitle if the recipient does not:

4                   (2)    Complete an approved degree or certificate program that is directly  
5 relevant to cybersecurity **OR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** at an eligible institution; and

6                   **Article – State Finance and Procurement**

7     3.5–806.

8                   (a)    There is a Governor’s Artificial Intelligence Subcabinet of the Governor’s  
9 Executive Council.

10                  (b)    The purpose of the Subcabinet is to facilitate and enhance cooperation among  
11 units of State government, in consultation with academic institutions and industries  
12 utilizing artificial intelligence.

13                  (F)    **THE SUBCABINET MAY REQUEST RESEARCH TO BE COMPLETED UNDER**  
14 **§ 14–111 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.**

15                  [(f)] (G)   The Governor shall provide the Subcabinet with sufficient resources to  
16 perform the functions of this section.

17                  SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
18 1, 2026.