

SENATE BILL 597

S1, F2

6lr2102

By: **Senator Hester**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

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

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

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

Preamble

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Article – Education

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 are located in the State.

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

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

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

12–124.

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

(2) “HUB” MEANS A MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY EXTENSION HUB.

(3) "PARTNERSHIP" MEANS THE MARYLAND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PARTNERSHIP.

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

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

(2) THE PURPOSE OF THE PARTNERSHIP IS TO PROVIDE A SINGLE NEXUS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INITIATIVES TO ADVANCE THE INNOVATION, ECONOMIC GROWTH, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC GOOD ACROSS THE STATE.

(3) THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL:

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

(II) ENSURE ALIGNMENT OF THE STATE'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EFFORTS TO PREVENT FRAGMENTATION;

(III) LEVERAGE RESOURCES TO INCREASE THE STATE'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE-TRAINED WORKFORCE AND TO INTEGRATE THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN STATE GOVERNMENT;

(IV) IDENTIFY AND PURSUE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS ALL RESOURCES, INCLUDING FEDERAL, STATE, INDUSTRY, AND PHILANTHROPIC ENTITIES; AND

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

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

(I) STATE AGENCIES;

(II) INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE;

(III) THE MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER; AND

1 (IV) THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS.

2 (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.

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

11 (3) THE PARTNERSHIP SHALL SUBMIT THE REPORTS REQUIRED
12 UNDER THIS SUBSECTION TO:

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.

21 (2) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 15, 2026, THERE SHALL BE ONE HUB
22 IN EACH OF THREE REGIONS OF THE STATE ESTABLISHED ON A PILOT BASIS.

23 (3) EACH HUB SHALL:

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;

(III) FACILITATE REMOTE, CLOUD-BASED ACCESS TO CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING LEVERAGING THE SIGNIFICANT COMPUTING POWER OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES; AND

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

12-125.

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

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

(2) THE PURPOSE OF THE LAB IS TO ASSIST STATE AGENCIES TO ACCELERATE THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BY HELPING STATE AGENCIES TO DISCOVER, DEVELOP, AND APPLY PROTOTYPES AND MANAGE RISK OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SOLUTIONS.

(3) IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, THE LAB SHALL:

(I) SUPPORT STATE AGENCIES TO:

1. IDENTIFY AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SOLUTIONS AND PRIORITIZE CHALLENGES FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND RELATED EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES;

2. SUPPORT THE DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE APPLICATIONS, AGENTIC SYSTEMS, AND INTERFACES; AND

3. DEVELOP PROTOTYPES AND PROOFS OF CONCEPTS FOR MODERNIZATION EFFORTS;

(II) MATCH STATE AGENCIES WITH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND FACULTY, RESEARCHERS, AND STUDENTS WITH EXPERTISE; AND

(III) SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE A PROVING

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

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

(3) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 OF THE YEAR FOLLOWING THE
RESEARCH REQUEST, THE CENTER FOR EQUITABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
AND MACHINE LEARNING SYSTEMS SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT THAT CONTAINS THE
INFORMATION LISTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO:

(I) THE GOVERNOR'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
SUBCABINET ESTABLISHED UNDER § 3.5-806 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND
PROCUREMENT ARTICLE; AND

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

18-3501.

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

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

18-3502.

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

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

18-3503.

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

(1) Is eligible for in-State tuition;

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

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

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

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

(i) Is a part-time student;

(ii) Continues to be eligible for in-State tuition under this article; and

(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**.

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

18-3504.

(a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, for 1 year for each year that the recipient receives a scholarship under this subtitle, a scholarship recipient shall:

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

1. A. Local education agency;

B. Public high school; or

C. Community college; or

2. Unit of:

A. State government;

B. County government; or

C. City or municipal government; or

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

1. A public high school; or

2. A community college.

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

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

Article – State Finance and Procurement

3.5–806.

(a) There is a Governor's Artificial Intelligence Subcabinet of the Governor's Executive Council.

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

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

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

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