

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**SB 902 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - CYBER WORKFORCE PROGRAM AND FUND -
ESTABLISHED**

MARCH 16, 2021

Chairwoman Kelley, Vice Chairman Feldman, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

I am Dr. Greg von Lehmen. I have worked on cybersecurity public policy for the last several years and am writing strictly on my own behalf to support SB 902.

The severe workforce gap that the bill would address is no doubt well documented by other testimony. I limit my remarks about the bill to six points:

1. This is not a one-sector bill. The bill aims to serve workforce needs across the Maryland's public and private sectors. Certainly, Maryland's cybersecurity services sector is a large consumer of cybersecurity talent and struggles to find and retain the talent that it needs. But the same can be said of the State and local governments, K20 schools, water districts, retailers, banks, hotel chains, hospitals, law practices, and many other organizations.
2. It puts the employers at the center. The bill provides for an employer-led process for identifying the hard-to-fill jobs that public and private employers have in common and for defining the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed for those jobs. It would do this effectively by providing for one hub organization both to a) facilitate this process and b) secure educational and training providers to develop and offer customized curricula aligned with those KSAs.
3. The bill brings together demand and supply. The bill is not simply about identifying training needs and partnering with willing providers. It is intentional about requiring the hub organization to do outreach to the unemployed and advise them about upskilling opportunities. Moreover, it would provide some scholarship support for those enrolling in the training and education programs.
4. The bill's program would be a multiplier. The program would complement and not supplant degree and certificate programs of colleges and universities in Maryland or the training relationships that they may have with individual corporate or public employers. The number of different cybersecurity roles is large and varied. The bill aims to address gap needs.
5. The bill does not require new State appropriations. It provides for the education and training use of unspent MHEC scholarship funds that would revert to the General Fund and sets up a vehicle to make immediate use of a portion of anticipated federal funds for cybersecurity workforce training.
6. The bill's approach is a proven one. The model has been used effectively in other states—Kentucky and Arizona—to meet gap needs in the healthcare industry. It can work as well in Maryland to build the State's cybersecurity workforce.

For the foregoing reasons, I urge a favorable report on the bill. Thank you.