



**2288 Blue Water Blvd STE 326**  
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Senator Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair  
Finance Committee  
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair  
Budget and Taxation Committee

Decisions Oriented Inc.  
2288 Blue Water Blvd STE 326  
Odenton, MD 21113

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Sincerely, My name is Jennifer Luik and I am the Co-Founder/CEO at Decisions Oriented Inc. I urge you to support Senate Bill 902 to establish the Cyber Workforce Program in the Partnership for Workforce Quality Program. The Cyber Workforce Program will leverage existing infrastructure in the Department of Commerce and will build on current educational programs and workforce training assets in the state. Utilizing federally awarded workforce development funds to create the Cyber Workforce Grant Fund, this Bill will provide the necessary resources to support the urgent and growing cybersecurity needs across Maryland. Fundamentally, SB 902 creates the framework for industry-driven input and collaboration in the development and execution of Maryland's workforce development strategy.

On any given day, there are more than 22,000 unfilled cybersecurity jobs in Maryland, and this doesn't include cyber positions embedded in other industries. These vacancies create security vulnerabilities in our critical infrastructure and essential services, but we don't have applicant pools with the right skills to fill our open positions. Currently the lead time for 534+ days to process a TS/SCI clearance. A small government contractor cannot keep an employee on overhead that long to await a clearance. As a Sub-contractor, Prime contractors will not allow a sub-contractor to place an uncleared candidate on the eCPRL to start the TS/SCI Clearance process, and therefore no opportunity for a small business to staff a cleared cybersecurity professionals. In addition, there is very little diversity and inclusion in the cleared cybersecurity field, because many technically qualified candidates that are persons of color, usually have foreign and/or incarcerated close contacts/family members. While it is not a disqualifier, it extends the process beyond 534+days to clear a TS/SCI employee, and forces businesses to not consider a diverse workforce because the ROI is not enough to clear this type of employee, and therefore systematically excluding minorities from this profession. Small businesses need some support in either changing the clearance process, or obtain some assistance in off-setting the expenses endured to clear an employee during this 534+ day process.



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By supporting and investing in this Bill and the Cyber Workforce Program, you will train Marylanders for good paying jobs with high growth potential. Simply put, Senate Bill 902 can put people to work and be the economic driver we need, especially as Maryland recovers from the coronavirus pandemic.

I hope I can count on you to support this critical legislation.

*Jennifer Luik*

Jennifer Luik  
Co-Founder/CEO  
Decisions Oriented Inc.  
CAMI Member Company