



SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 710

State and Local Government and Private Employers – Teleworking

February 25, 2021

Favorable with Amendment

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding Senate Bill 710. The bill requires a governing body's designee, to establish telework programs and adopt a certain telework policy and telework guidelines; requiring the State Court Administrator and the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to establish a telework program, policy and guidelines. Last March, the University System of Maryland (USM) issued temporary guidance on telework to promote employee, student, and community health and safety by encouraging social distancing, including self-isolation, during the presence of COVID-19. The USM agrees with the fundamental purpose of Senate Bill 710. However, as written, there would be significant fiscal implications related to necessary information system changes to align the USM's telework program with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The USM has a cybersecurity standard that is functionally compatible with the State's standard as required by statute. USM standards account for many nuances of cybersecurity in public higher education and compliance/adherence to another standard would be costly and introduce unnecessary risk to our IT Security program. Due to the uncertainty of the cost to conform the USM's human resources IT system to DBM the USM respectfully requests an amendment.

On page 3, after line 12, add the following language:

“(IV) FOR THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS, THE CHANCELLOR.”

The USM is supportive of updating telework policy and guidance overall and would like Senate Bill 710 to reflect the USM's discretion to designate and approve positions for telework based on operational necessity. The university environment is unique in its mission to provided academic instruction, research and public service. That mission reflects the work-need diversity of faculty and staff and the application of telework standards that need nuanced attention and oversight.

Again, the USM is favorable with the aforementioned amendment on Senate Bill 710.