

Senator Delores G. Kelly, Chair  
Senator Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair  
Finance Committee

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair  
Budget and Taxation Committee

**Edwards Performance Solutions**  
**10980 Grantchester Way, Suite 300**  
**Columbia, MD 21044**

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Sincerely, my name is Gina Abate, and I am the President & CEO at Edwards Performance Solutions. 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. As the need for skilled cybersecurity talent continues to grow, Maryland must remain competitive to increase Maryland's overall economic position. Companies must have access to the correct internship and apprenticeship programs to provide the necessary talent pool to win and perform work in both the Federal and commercial markets. A more skilled workforce also means stronger cybersecurity programs and a reduction of breaches – keeping Maryland businesses and their customers profitable for years to come.

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.

Sincerely,



Gina Y. Abate  
President and CEO  
Edwards Performance Solutions