



House Bill 38

State Government – Department of Information Technology - Cybersecurity

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Health and Government Operations
Committee

Date: January 21, 2021

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 38. This bill would require the Secretary of the Department of Information Technology, in consultation with the Attorney General, to develop and promote guidance on consistent cybersecurity strategies for counties, municipal corporations, school systems, and all other governmental entities.

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of ransomware attacks on governments across the United States, including within Maryland. Now, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for increased resources to maintain cybersecurity and digital infrastructure are at an all-time high as hackers leverage the pandemic to stage cyberattacks.

HB 38 takes an important step in strengthening the relationship between the Maryland Department of Information Technology and local government information technology officials, without a state-mandated change that would preclude local input. This legislation would allow for local government entities to make the final decision on implementation of cybersecurity-related guidance, allowing counties to maintain their authority while providing a welcome resource.

MACo and county governments stand ready to work with state policy makers to develop cybersecurity strategies and appreciate the addition of language in this year's legislation to avoid putting an expensive, burdensome mandate on county IT operations. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB 38**.