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To: Members of The House Judiciary Committee and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Doyle Niemann, Chair, Legislative Committee, Criminal Law and Practice Section

Date: February 1, 2021

Subject: **HB425 – SB623 – Crimes Involving Computers (Ransomware)**

Position: **Support**

The Legislative Committee of the Criminal Law & Practice Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **Supports HB425 – SB623 – Crimes Involving Computers (Ransomware)**.

This bill bans the possession of ransomware, which is defined in the bill, with the intent to introduce it into a computer, network or system. It adds health care facility and public school to the list of entities protected and lowers the threshold for classification as a felony.

Ransomware is a growing problem with far-reaching consequences. It has affected multiple entities in Maryland, including major health care facilities, governmental entities, and even the Office of the Public Defender. This is a useful extension of the current law.

The ban on possession of ransomware with intent to use is particularly useful as it will allow law enforcement agencies to act before the harm has been caused.

For the reasons stated, we **Support HB425 – SB623 – Crimes Involving Computers (Ransomware)**.

If you have questions about the position of the Criminal Law and Practice Section's Legislative Committee, please feel free to address them to me at 240-606-1298 or at doyleniemann@verizon.net.

Should you have other questions, please contact The MSBA's Legislative Office at (410)-269-6464 / (410)-685-7878 ext: 3066 or at Richard@MSBA.org.