

Testimony in Support of SB623- Criminal Law - Crimes Involving Computers

House of Delegates Judiciary Committee

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My name is Stacey Volodin, JD, and I write this testimony representing only myself. I have been a veterinary technician at the largest veterinary hospital in Maryland for two years. My hospital is owned by a corporation that owns more than a thousand veterinary hospitals and pet resorts across North America and Australia. Approximately 18 months ago, the corporate servers used by my clinic and many others (at least 50) across the East Coast, were incapacitated by ransomware for weeks.

As a modern veterinary clinic, all patient records are maintained on corporate servers. From the moment the ransomware was unleashed, doctors and staff could no longer access the medical histories of our patients. We could no longer see vaccine histories to know whether the angry, biting cat was up to date on it's rabies vaccine. We could no longer review the numerous heart medications a senior Chihuahua was on to determine if we could alter doses to reduce the dog's blood pressure. Pet owner's recollection of medications is not always accurate, and our ability to care for pets was greatly hampered through the loss of access to medical history. I hate to imagine a pet's life shortened because someone wanted to obstruct access to veterinary servers.

Our clinic could not register client payments and had to log every transaction by hand. We were unable to see whether a client had a large balance or a credit, whether they received a discount, or if we should only accept cash because their checks didn't always clear. We had to have extra staff during each shift who focused only on these issues.

To my knowledge, those who attacked my hospitals servers were not caught. The company's IT department worked on the issue around the clock. Because of my clinic's size, we were a priority to have our servers up and running, but some clinics did not have their servers back for over a month.

If people use ransomware against the 911 system, an entire city, or an animal clinic, something must be done. If we cannot outright stop them, we must give law enforcement the tools to intercept and charge those who possess ransomware. Other Maryland entities should not experience the hurdles endured by my clinic and many others across the East Coast.

Please protect Maryland businesses, small and large, from those who chose to use ransomware.

I respectfully urge your support of SB623.

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