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February 2, 2021

**TO:** The Honorable Luke Clippinger  
Chair, Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** The Office of the Attorney General

**RE:** HB 425 – Criminal Law - Crimes Involving Computers– **Letter of Support**

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The Office of the Attorney General urges the Judiciary Committee to favorably report HB 425. Delegate Barron's HB 425 prohibits acts that interrupt or impair the function of a health care facility, or a public school. The legislation also prohibits the intentional use of ransomware and allows a civil claim for damages caused by prohibited actions.

The incidence of cybersecurity attacks have been increasing steadily over time. In 2019, 205,280 organizations were hacked in ransomware attacks and this is a 41 percent increase compared to 2018.<sup>1</sup> According to the F.B.I., these attacks are becoming "more targeted, sophisticated, and costly" and ransomware, especially, is "the most serious cybercriminal problem[] we face right now."<sup>2</sup> The legislation codifies this concern to deter cyber-attacks through imposing punishments and allows victims to recover damages. It is critical for our State to have laws to fight against cybercrimes, and HB 425 is yet another means to do so..

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of Attorney General urges a favorable report on HB 425.

cc: Delegate Barron & Members of the Judiciary Committee

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<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Popper, *Ransomware Attacks Grow, Crippling Cities and Businesses*, N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 9, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/09/technology/ransomware-attacks.html#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20205%2C280%20organizations%20submitted,helps%20companies%20hit%20by%20ransomware.>

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* (internal quotations omitted).