



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

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SENATE BILL 710 State and Local Government and Private Employers - Teleworking (King)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: February 25, 2021

COMMITTEE: Senate Finance

SUMMARY OF BILL: SB 710 requires State and local government agencies to establish a telework program and encourages private sector employers to do the same. It intends for the General Assembly to authorize a tax credit to assist private sector employers in offsetting the costs incurred for the development and implementation of a telework policy, including hiring consultants or other support services, if federal funds are made available for that purpose. This legislation would take effect on October 1, 2021.

This bill modifies and expands SPP §2-308 Teleworking, to include the Judiciary and Legislative branches of State government. It removes the goal to have 15% of eligible employees participating in the telework program and replaces it with the requirement to have the maximum number of eligible employees teleworking. The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is charged with issuing guidelines to protect equipment and maintain security of information.

On or before December 1st each year, each unit of State government, or the principal department in which the unit is located, shall report to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, on the number of eligible employees participating in the applicable telework program.

EXPLANATION: Per the Governor's directive, in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, all employees who are successfully able to perform their job duties remotely are now teleworking. To increase telework options, the State has relaxed prior telework requirements and now allows teleworking employees to have very flexible work hours which requires that they complete their eight .hours of work time within a 24 hour period, to work from home even with children at home and defers to supervisors regarding telework performance instead of mandating cumbersome tracking forms

As a result, the number of eligible teleworkers in State government has significantly increased since mid-March 2020. As of January 2021, 46% of State employees were teleworking at least 50% of the work week. With current technology, it has proven to be a successful solution for many employees. Long-term, this may result in cost savings with less needed office space and overhead costs of having employees in a central office location.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in collaboration with other State Personnel Management System agencies, anticipates permanently adopting many of the current practices which have proven to be successful.

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