Written Support

House Appropriations Committee
House Bill 1334 (Kerr) Labor and Employment – Workforce Development - Cybersecurity
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On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the 58,000 students we serve, we thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to support *House Bill 1334 (Kerr) Labor and Employment – Workforce Development – Cybersecurity* . This bill establishes the Cybersecurity Workforce Accelerator Program to increase the number of individuals entering the cybersecurity workforce, expand, market, and increase the efficiency of cybersecurity workforce programs in the State, invest in new and innovative cybersecurity education programs, and provide coordination between educational institutions to prepare students. The bill also creates a Fund to be used for administration of the Accelerator Program and to provide grants to educational institutions to operate cybersecurity workforce development programs.

The Cybersecurity Workforce Accelerator Program will help the State encourage, develop, and retain top talent in the cybersecurity fields. According to the most recent data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the outlook for the job growth rate for security analysts is 33% through 2030 in the US. Providing grant funding to educational institutions for their cybersecurity programs will open pathways for more students to pursue employment in this critical need area.

Eleven MICUA institutions offer programs in computer science and five offer specialized programs in cybersecurity, including upper-division certificates, bachelor's of science degrees, post-baccalaureate certificates, master's degrees, post-master's certificates, and doctoral degrees. The MICUA programs include Cybersecurity, Cyber Analytics, and Cyberpsychology. Capitol Technology University received the prestigious SC Media 2020 Award for Best Cybersecurity Higher Education Program in America. During the period of 2016-2020, MICUA institutions awarded over 600 degrees in cybersecurity. Our institutions have an 82% undergraduate retention rate, and 87% of first-time full-time freshman who first enroll at a MICUA institution graduate from that same MICUA institution, or a transfer institution within six years.

We appreciate the sponsor's vision and the General Assembly's ongoing support for Cybersecurity workforce development. MICUA students and the entire State of Maryland will benefit from these initiatives and investments, as they graduate from our institutions and join the State's talent pipeline in cybersecurity and other STEM fields.

For these reasons, MICUA urges a favorable Committee report for House Bill 1334.