

Written Statement of

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In opposition to State Bill 836 Before the Maryland Senate Committee on Budget and Taxation**March 9, 2022**

On behalf of Zscaler, Inc. I respectfully submit the following statement in opposition to Maryland Senate Bill 836, *Procurement – Information Technology – Cloud-Based Virtual Desktop Infrastructure* as introduced and request that the bill be amended to be vendor-neutral and performance-based.

Zscaler is a leading cybersecurity company that provides secure cloud computing services to Fortune 500 companies as well as federal, state, and local government agencies. Zscaler’s mission is to make the cloud a safe place to do business and empower organizations to realize the full potential of the cloud computing and mobility by securely connecting users to applications anywhere, from any device.

Zscaler applauds efforts to boost the cybersecurity and resiliency of Maryland state agencies in the face of relentless cyber threats including recent ransomware attacks impacting public health and education organizations. Ensuring secure remote IT access for state workers is critical given the current cyber threat landscape. The federal government and leading private sector organizations recognize that transitioning to a “zero trust” approach to security provides a more defensible architecture for this new environment. For example, the federal Zero Trust Strategy issued by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) “places significant emphasis on stronger enterprise identity and access controls, including multi-factor authentication” and shifts away from relying on network perimeter protections to guard against unauthorized access.¹

However, SB 836 as introduced directs the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to procure a specific type of outdated virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) rather than encourage the evaluation and use of comparable technologies that would better advance Maryland state government agencies’ transition to modern zero trust architectures. SB 836 requires DoIT to issue

¹ see: White House OMB, Memorandum M-22-09: Moving the U.S. Government toward zero trust cybersecurity principles, Jan. 26, 2022, *available at*: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/M-22-09.pdf>, accessed: Mar. 8, 2022.

a request for proposals or make a determination to participate in an intergovernmental cooperative purchasing agreement with another state for the implementation of a "Device as a Service" model and ongoing maintenance of cloud-based VDI used by each unit of State government as desktop support and management systems. This requirement would effectively eliminate consideration of remote access solutions other than VDI that could provide similar capabilities in a more cost effective and secure manner.

Zscaler requests that SB 836 be amended by striking each reference to "cloud-based virtual desktop infrastructure" and replacing with "cloud-based virtual desktop infrastructure or comparable technologies that would advance the transition to zero trust architectures."

With these changes, Zscaler would support the legislation and urge the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to favorably report SB 836 with amendments.

Thank you for your consideration.