

Sen. Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Sen. Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee

Cybersecurity Association of Maryland, Inc.
1215 E Fort Ave, Suite 203
Baltimore, MD 21230

February 7, 2022

Dear Senators Pinsky and Kagan,

I urge you to support Senate Bill 4 to expand the existing Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship Program and to establish the Maryland Cybersecurity Loan Assistance Repayment Programs. On any given day, there are more than 22,000 unfilled cybersecurity jobs in Maryland. Our state and local government agencies are particularly vulnerable to this hiring challenge, and this results in serious security gaps when it comes to securing our critical infrastructure and essential services. House Bill 24 is a necessary step in bridging that gap.

Expanding eligibility for the Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship Program to include both part-time and full-time students reflects the reality that cybersecurity students are often going back to school or working full-time while earning their degree. By expanding the eligibility from two years to three years for full-time students, the Program provides additional support to students who are committed to securing our public systems, at a less competitive salary than their peers who join the private sector. House Bill 24 would also increase the number of eligible positions to fulfill the work requirement and respond to the growing need for cybersecurity professionals in our local school systems and community colleges. Lastly, requiring MSDE to provide high school students with information about the scholarship is necessary to attract diverse students and build the cybersecurity workforce pipeline.

The complementary Maryland Cybersecurity Loan Assistance Repayment Program that House Bill 24 would establish can incentivize cybersecurity professionals to work for state, county, or municipal governments by providing loan repayments to supplement their compensation. This can attract graduates, who were unaware of or ineligible for the Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship while earning their degrees, to protect our critical infrastructure.

As a cybersecurity trade association leader, I have a strong interest in strengthening the security posture of our state, county, and local governments. By supporting and investing in this Bill, you will train and incentivize Marylanders to do this important and meaningful work.

I hope I can count on you to support this critical legislation.

Tasha Cornish
Executive Director
Cybersecurity Association of Maryland, Inc.