



Senate Bill 4

Cybersecurity Scholarship Program – Alterations and Maryland Cybersecurity Loan Assistance Repayment Program – Establishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs Committee

Date: February 9, 2022

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 4. This bill would incentivize cybersecurity professionals to seek employment with county government at a time when local governments are increasingly threatened with cyber-attacks and counties rely on experts to secure systems and maintain operations.

SB 4 creates a pathway for cybersecurity professionals to pursue careers with local government in two ways: by requiring that the number of years of scholarship be equivalent to time spent working in public service, and through establishing a student loan repayment assistance program for cybersecurity staff employed in local government. The bill specifies that eligible service includes employment with a local education agency, public high school, public institution of higher education, community college, or unit of state government, county government, or city or municipal government.

Furthermore, SB 4 smartly develops partnerships between high school career and technology programs and the Cybersecurity Scholarship Program, encouraging students to remain in Maryland with in-state tuition and to pursue studies in cybersecurity. Importantly, SB 4 recognizes community colleges as a critical piece of Maryland's higher education infrastructure, and therefore eligible to participate in these programs – potentially as a major contributor.

County government relies on secure and stable cyber and technological programs to successfully deliver services to the communities they serve. SB 4 helps develop cybersecurity experts by leveraging our local institutions of higher education and creating a direct track to work in the field with local governments. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 4 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.