



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 4

DATE: February 9, 2022

SPONSOR: Senator Hester

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

CONTACT PERSON: Kathleen Boucher (kathleen.boucher@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support

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

The bill expands the existing Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship Program (Scholarship Program) and creates a new Cybersecurity Loan Assistance Repayment Program (Loan Repayment Program). The Scholarship Program is expanded to allow a full-time student to hold an award for a maximum of 3 years, rather than 2 years, and to allow a part-time student to hold an award for a maximum of 6 years. The Office of Student Financial Assistance at the Maryland Higher Education Commission is given authority to determine prorated awards for part-time students. Currently, an award recipient is required to work for a State agency in a cybersecurity field for the same number of years that the recipient held the award. The bill allows a recipient to meet the work requirement through employment in the cybersecurity field with a county or municipal government, public high school (including teaching), or community college (including teaching). The new Loan Repayment Program will assist in the repayment of higher education loans for individuals who are employed in the cybersecurity field with the same employers who qualify under the Scholarship Program. The Office of Student Financial Assistance is required to adopt regulations governing the application process, system of prioritizing applicants, and maximum amount of loan repayment award.

This bill is an important policy initiative to help to ensure that State and local governments, school systems, and community colleges are able to recruit and retain employees who can support critically important cybersecurity functions. Montgomery County strongly supports this bill and respectfully request that the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee give the bill a favorable report.