TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 753
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - CYBERSECURITY

BRUCE SPECTOR
BALTIMORE CYBER RANGE, LLC

POSITION: FAVORABLE

March 16, 2022

Chairwoman Kelley, Vice Chairman Feldman, and Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 753.

The Cyber Workforce Accelerator will leverage existing infrastructure in the Departments of Commerce, Education and Labor and will build on current educational programs and workforce training assets in the state. This Bill will provide the necessary resources to support the urgent and growing cybersecurity needs across Maryland.

On any given day, there are more than 22,000 unfilled cybersecurity jobs in Maryland, affecting not only our industry, but cybersecurity functions that are embedded in other industries. These vacancies create security vulnerabilities in our critical infrastructure and essential services, but we don't have applicant pools with the right skills to fill our open positions. Baltimore Cyber and its Strategic Industry Partnership (SIP) have been training Cyber security and IT (Information Technology) skills to unemployed and underemployed Maryland residents for the past 5 years under the EARN Program. We have has seen first-hand the dire need for more trained entry level IT and Cyber security workers. A significant challenge has been to keep the trainees on schedule during the duration of the 6-month program. However, those who do complete stand an excellent chance of obtaining a career in IT or Cybersecurity at a compelling starting wage with good advancement potential.

The Cybersecurity Workforce Accelerator would provide an infusion of resources to impactful training programs and will help remove barriers to build a skilled and diverse cybersecurity talent pipeline. By supporting and investing in this Bill and the Cyber Workforce Accelerator, you will train Marylanders for good paying jobs with high growth potential. Our organization urges a favorable report. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.