



TO: Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
FROM: Mary Beth Tung – Director, MEA
SUBJECT: HB 419 (SB 390) - State Government - Information Technology - Cybersecurity
DATE: February 22, 2022

MEA POSITION: FAV

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) strongly supports this legislation that will establish the position of State Chief Information Security Officer and an Office of Security Management within the Department of Information Technology, as well as codify the Maryland Cybersecurity Coordinating Council (Council).

The need for continually evolving cybersecurity efforts is evidenced by events that often make front page headlines. One energy-related event was the May 2021 ransomware attack on Colonial Pipeline Company (Colonial), where the system temporarily suspended operations as a precautionary measure. Colonial supplies 45% of Maryland's total liquid fuel, including for both air and ground operations at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport as well as the ground vehicles for the Port of Baltimore. The affected regions, including Maryland, experienced higher prices at the pump, panic buying, and supply shortages. Stores that typically sell ~4,000 gallons of gasoline per day were selling ~4,000 gallon in a four-hour period. As a result, Maryland found itself in the unfortunate position of declaring a State of Emergency due to the major disruption to its fuel supply chain.

Fortunately, MEA, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and others, were able to mitigate the impacts of this event with coordination overseen by the Maryland Department of Emergency Management. The main reason that this energy disruption did not reach crisis level is because of the overall federal and state government response; stabilizing the energy supply lines and ensuring continuity of services.

The Colonial cyberattack was the largest attack on the U.S. energy system to date. Attacks such as this emphasize the new reality Maryland finds itself in, and highlights the pressing need to prioritize cybersecurity. The new Chief Information Security Officer and Office of Security Management will undoubtedly improve the performance and function of state information systems with ever-evolving security enhancements. MEA is particularly interested in the codification of the Council, which will provide the security related training and data sharing needed to minimize informational lag, promote more unified efforts, and facilitate interagency cooperation including that with federal agencies.

For these reasons, MEA kindly asks the committee to issue a **favorable report**.