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Carroll and Fredrick Counties

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April 1, 2024

Support House Bill 1189

Public Schools – Mathematics Credit – College Preparatory Computer Science
or Computer Programming Course

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 1189.

This bill has passed both this committee and the House several times, and it is my hope it will get a vote in the Senate this session.

The bill seeks to **enable** county boards of education to allow computer science or computer programming to satisfy the graduation requirement for one of the math credits, a significant trend that is developing as the necessity for computer education becomes vital.

Maryland needs to join this trend.

I would like to make clear that this bill would allow localities to adopt this option but would not mandate changes in curriculum.

Research shows 83 percent of parents and 64 percent of school principals believe offering computer science is more - or equally - important as any required course. Computer science is about logic, problem solving, and creativity. And it leads to jobs.

According to Code.org, there are currently more than 500,000 open computing jobs nationwide. Dice.com has 49,500 openings for computer positions across Maryland. These are high paying jobs.

Over double the average annual salary of other positions. Sixty-seven percent of all new jobs in STEM are in computing. Lifetime earnings for a general college graduate is \$1.19 million dollars. Lifetime earnings of a computer science major is \$1.67 million dollars.

Women who try computer science in high school are ten times more likely to choose this as a major. Black and Latino students are seven times more likely to take this course of study. This trend continues to grow in the United States.

Many states allow computer science or computer programming to count toward a math, science and even language graduation requirement. The trend the past several years is to move toward allowing more opportunity for students to choose computer science classes as one of their graduation requirements. It is important to take this step because it places *value* on these classes. Please visit [landscape.pdf \(code.org\)](#) to see a state-by-state breakdown on what graduation credit substitutions are allowed across the country.

These trends align with much of what we intend to do as we start to implement the Blueprint. But we cannot wait for full implementation. We need to do something now while the full plans are being developed. No child should lose this important opportunity.

We live in a technology driven society and almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives require computer skills. Exposing our children to computer science and programming will provide them with options and exciting career paths that will pave the way for opportunity and success. More than 90 percent of parents would like to have this opportunity for their children.

I have worked as a technical recruiter for almost 15 years. It goes without question that the hardest positions to fill are those in the computer science and computer programming arena. The average starting salary for a basic Help Desk Technician is between \$60,000 - \$65,000 per year. As these careers progress, the average salaries are well over six figures in the defense and commercial sector.

If this bill is passed - allowing local school boards to implement these classes - I believe we will expose all interested students to computer science and programming classes and in turn will provide a more comprehensive education that will result in greater opportunities for our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I again ask for a favorable report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "April Rose". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Delegate April Rose
District 5, Carroll and Frederick counties

