



Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice-Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 980: Education - Computer Science - Content Standards and Requirements
- SUPPORT**

March 6, 2024

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

As President & Chief Executive Officer of the National Cryptologic Foundation (NCF) and member of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council on the Workforce Development Sub-committee, I write this letter in support of Senate Bill 980, entitled: *Education - Computer Science - Content Standards and Requirements*.

NCF's mission is to educate the public on the importance of cryptology and cybersecurity in defending our nation, focusing on educating the public, especially the nation's brightest young minds. As a nationally reputed provider of assured quality cyber education resources focused on K-20 cohorts, our efforts help reduce cyber workforce deficits and current skills shortfalls, promoting cyber professions as a fulfilling career choice. The purpose of this Senate Bill 980 aligns with the NCF's educational and workforce goals in Maryland and across the country.

As written, Senate Bill 980 would require public high schools to promote and increase the enrollment of students (of color and underrepresented groups) in high school computer science courses. In addition, the enactment of this legislation would require, beginning on or before June 1, 2025, the State Board of Education to update computer science content standards to include AI and cybersecurity.

More importantly, the enactment of this bill would also require county boards of education to provide developmentally appropriate computer science instruction in public elementary and middle schools in the county. This computer science instruction will be aligned to the same State content standards for Maryland's high school students (grades 9 through 12). The intent will be to increase the enrollment of high school computer science courses as well as providing the needed preparation and support to guide interested students into computer science-related courses and potential career pathways.

It is for these reasons; I am in full support of Senate Bill 980. I strongly urge this committee to give this legislation a **FAVORABLE** report and to enact this important piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Nelson

Laura Nelson
President & Chief Executive Officer
National Cryptologic Foundation