



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 979: Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines and Pilot Program - 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 979, entitled: *Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines and Pilot Program*.

NCF's mission is to advance the nation's interest in cyber and cryptology. We do this by:

- Educating citizens to be cyber smart individuals;
- Developing pathways for the future cyber and cryptologic workforce and;
- Engaging and convening partners to address emerging cyber and cryptologic issues.

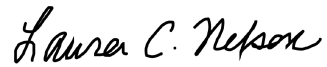
Our efforts help reduce cyber workforce deficits and current skills shortfalls, promoting cyber-related professions as a fulfilling career choice. The purpose of this Senate Bill 980 aligns with the NCF's educational and workforce goals in Maryland and across the country.

If passed, Senate Bill 979 would require the State Department of Education, in consultation with the AI Subcabinet of the Governor's Executive Council, to develop and update guidelines on artificial intelligence for county boards of education and to develop a pilot program to support the AI Subcabinet of the Governor's Executive Council. The bill would also require the Department to develop certain strategies to coordinate and assist county boards to provide recommendations for integrating artificial intelligence into certain college and career readiness standards.

Over the past year the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in everyday life has risen dramatically with AI capabilities available to the general public. While there are certainly benefits to the use of AI that includes, among others, smart decision making, automation for repetitive jobs, improved customer experience, and faster and smarter data analysis, there are also some pitfalls that must be understood. The ethical use of AI must be taught and understood by our educators and students as these capabilities are implemented into our systems and adopted for use in everyday life. This will require policies and safeguards to be put in place to protect our systems and more importantly, our students who represent the future of our nation. The vision of the NCF is to strengthen trust in the digital ecosystem. Senate Bill 979 is a vital step to securing that vision for the state of Maryland.

It is for these reasons; I am in full support of Senate Bill 979. 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura C. Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Laura Nelson
President & Chief Executive Officer
National Cryptologic Foundation