



HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
House Bill 999
Workgroup on Establishing a Science and Technology Best Practices and
Innovation Network
March 5, 2024
Favorable

Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to share our position on House Bill 999. This bill establishes the Workgroup on Establishing a Science and Technology Best Practices and Innovation Network, staffed by the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC).

USM comprises 12 distinguished universities and three regional centers with distinct and unique approaches to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore. A range of institutional types complement this geographic diversity. The USM includes land-grant universities, regional universities, and HBCUs, together with universities whose missions focus on online education, professional and graduate education, and environmental education.

Learning innovation in the fields of science and technology claims a space at the intersection of familiarity, knowledge, design, analytics, and art – all in the unique context of network building across disciplines. If we're correct, these new frontiers are poised to raise new questions, new research problems and new methodologies. More importantly, the viability of learning innovation depends heavily on the policy network that emerges around its core questions. A critical mass of experts in science, technology, and industry will need to take up the challenge of researching how the ideas of learning science get translated into the formations, incentives and operations of critical public infrastructure.

House Bill 999 creates a platform to facilitate the open exchange of state-of-the-art data and information using empirical information and sound science to inform Maryland's innovation, and best practices. Evaluating, registering and establishing a readily accessible network of experts in science, technology, and industry, including expansion of existing entities and networks requires expert organization and guidance.

The Chancellor and Board of Regents understand the importance of engaging our institutions proactively to provide support and service on critical issues facing Maryland. UMBC's service to the Workgroup on Establishing a Science and Technology Best Practices and Innovation Network is an extension of our commitment.

The USM urges a favorable report on House Bill 999.

