



Testimony to the House Health & Government Operations Committee
HB1271 Information Technology-Artificial Intelligence-Policies and Procedures
(Artificial Intelligence Governance Act of 2024)
Position: Favorable

March 5, 2024

The Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Health & Government Operations Committee
Room 241, HOB
Annapolis, MD 21401
cc: Members, Health & Government Operations Committee

Honorable Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances economic rights and equity for Maryland families through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

We are here in support of HB1271 which addresses the potential promise and peril of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by: 1) requiring inventory and impact assessments of state systems that use AI; 2) require departments to develop and adopt policies and procedures related to development, procurement, implementation, use and ongoing assessment of systems that use AI as well as notify individuals or groups that may have been harmed by the use of AI; and 3) establishes a Governor's subcabinet to facilitate coordination and collaboration and work with academics and industry

Last summer, Economic Action released a new report [Digital Equity and Justice in Maryland](#) which looks at issues of digital access as well as digital justice. Within the digital justice landscape, the report highlights challenges with the use of AI in hiring decisions, predictive policing, and housing. There is potential for AI to be calibrated in a way that it reduces rather than amplifies bias and existing inequalities but that is far from a given. We believe that HB1271 is an important first step but would suggest that the subcabinet should also consider including advocates in their conversations since there are consumer protection, civil rights, fair housing, and privacy advocates who would add to these important dialogues.

We support HB1271 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White
Executive Director

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