



January 14, 2025

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

My name is Ben Yelin, and I am the Director for Public Policy & External Affairs at the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security. I was also the co-chair of the 2021 ad hoc subcommittee of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council, which wrote a report with recommendations on state and local cybersecurity in Maryland. The report informed much of the cybersecurity policy legislation that passed during the 2022 session.

SB244 is a Department of Information Technology (DoIT) departmental bill making a series of changes to the 2022 cybersecurity legislative package. While most of the changes seem reasonable, and generally concern assigning responsibilities between the Office of Security Management at DoIT and the Cyber Preparedness Unit at MDEM, there is one provision that is problematic, in my view. The bill removes a requirement that the Office of Security Management (OSM) annually publish the percentage of the state IT budget that is dedicated to cybersecurity. Including that data point was one of the recommendations of the 2021 State and Local Cybersecurity Report drafted by the ad hoc committee of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council.<sup>1</sup>

Including the percentage of the IT budget used on cybersecurity is both a transparency measure, as it gives stakeholders an understanding of the Department's current priorities, and an important planning tool. If the State Government wants to invest in cybersecurity, it should have data on how much the Department is currently spending. The Federal Government and many state governments include this number in required annual reports, making clear that it is a best practice.

As a co-drafter of that 2021 report, I hope that the committee will inquire about the reason for repealing this provision in the proposed bill, and that the committee can find a way to amend the bill to reinstate this reporting requirement.

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<sup>1</sup> See, <https://www.umgc.edu/content/dam/umgc/documents/upload/maryland-state-and-local-government-cybersecurity-analysis-and-recommendations.pdf>, Recommendation 19, p. 26



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