

2025-01-28 SB 294 - Support.pdf

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February 11, 2025

TO: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Howard Barr
Assistant Attorney General and Principal Counsel, Office of the Attorney General

RE: Senate Bill 294 – Maryland Cybersecurity Council - Membership –
Alterations - **Support**

The Office of the Attorney General respectfully urges this Committee to report favorably on **Senate Bill 294** - Maryland Cybersecurity Council - Membership – Alterations. **Senate Bill 294** alters the selection process of the chair of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council as well as the membership of the Council.

Presently, the Council is chaired by the Attorney General, who is charged with appointing a number of the Council’s outside of government members. The Council’s membership is broadly representative of Maryland government, including as members (among others), the Secretary of Information Technology; the Secretary of State Police; the Secretary of Commerce; the Adjutant General; the State Administrator of Elections, and the Secretary of Emergency Management and civil society, including individuals from the business, education, non-profit, and consumer interest sectors.

Among other things, the Council collaborates on cybersecurity issues, sponsors research, and recommends cyber-related policies for legislative consideration. The Council’s statutory charge includes several specific responsibilities and a broad mandate to consider emerging cybersecurity issues affecting the state and its residents.

While the Attorney General will continue to be a Council member, **House Bill 376** proposes that the Governor be responsible for appointing the members now appointed by the Attorney General and that the Chair be elected by the Council membership. The Attorney General, of course, is the Chief Legal Officer for the State and, together with the assistant attorneys general and professional staff who comprise the Office of the Attorney General, works to advise and represent the State and its constituent units across a wide variety programs and subject matter. The Attorney General is not intimately involved with cybersecurity issues and, because of that, believes it is in the Council's best interest that it be chaired by individuals more closely tied to that sector. For a similar reason, OAG believes it is not best positioned to appropriately appoint members to the Council.

Thank you for considering this testimony. For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges a favorable report on **Senate Bill 294**.

cc: Education, Energy and the Environment Committee members

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SB294 - Maryland Cybersecurity Council - Membership - Alterations
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
February 13, 2025
Favorable With Amendment

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 294. My name is Tasha Cornish, and I represent the Cybersecurity Association, Inc. (CA), a statewide, nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization dedicated to the growth and success of Maryland's cybersecurity industry. Established in 2015, CA represents over 600 businesses ranging from Fortune 500 companies to independent operators, collectively employing nearly 100,000 Marylanders.

Senate Bill 294 proposes changes to the appointing authority of the Maryland Cybersecurity Council. We commend this effort to strengthen the Council's representation and effectiveness in addressing critical cybersecurity challenges. In light of Maryland's status as a global leader in cybersecurity, it is vital that the Council reflects the full diversity and expertise of the state's cybersecurity ecosystem.

CA respectfully requests an amendment to SB 294 to include the Cybersecurity Association, Inc., as a member of the Council, in a manner similar to the Maryland Tech Council. CA's inclusion will ensure representation of the broad spectrum of cybersecurity businesses in Maryland, from large firms to small and emerging enterprises. Our deep ties to the industry, educational institutions, and policymakers uniquely position us to contribute valuable insights and foster collaboration within the Council.

We believe that CA's membership on the Council will enhance its ability to achieve its mission of advising the state on cybersecurity policy, fostering public-private partnerships, and advancing workforce development. Including CA will also align with the Council's commitment to leveraging Maryland's robust cybersecurity ecosystem to address emerging threats and seize new opportunities.

Proposed Amendment

We propose adding the following language to the membership provisions of SB 294:

“(8) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CYBERSECURITY ASSOCIATION, INC.,
APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.”

This amendment mirrors the representation currently afforded to the Maryland Tech Council and reflects CA's standing as a key stakeholder in Maryland's cybersecurity community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, CA strongly supports the goals of Senate Bill 294 and respectfully urges the Committee to adopt this amendment to ensure the Maryland Cybersecurity Council benefits from the diverse and comprehensive expertise of Maryland's cybersecurity sector.

Thank you for your consideration, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.