



**Good morning, members of the committee.**

My name is Gregg Smith, and I am a six-time CEO in the cybersecurity field, currently leading the Technology Advancement Center. Throughout my career, all of my companies have been based in Maryland, and I have firsthand experience in the challenges of hiring skilled cybersecurity professionals. The shortage of talent is real and continues to grow.

As Anne Arundel County recently demonstrated, the threat of cyberattacks is not only real but increasing every day. We see daily in the media just how vulnerable our nation is. In my current role, my organization supports the Department of Defense and various government agencies in areas of cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. I have deep insight into the activities of nation-state adversaries, particularly when it comes to the security of our critical infrastructure. Right now, our country is in a highly vulnerable state.

This bill is crucial to expanding our cybersecurity workforce, and I'd like to draw your attention to one key component of the bill that addresses cybersecurity clinics. These clinics focus on the critical infrastructure sectors and the operational technology that powers our water systems, power grids, hospitals, food distribution, and communications networks.

Both Maryland and the nation as a whole are seriously lacking the cyber expertise required to protect these essential systems. Consider the consequences of a cyberattack on our water system—if it were taken offline for just 24 hours, it would lead to widespread panic and unrest. Or, imagine the nightmare scenario of an attack on a hospital's water system that contaminates the water with harmful chemicals like chlorine—leading to the tragic loss of innocent lives.

While my organization provides operational technology cyber ranges to train military personnel, I have personally witnessed the severe shortage of skilled workers in the critical infrastructure sector.

I fully support House Bill 1468 and its cross-file SB 867. Thank you for your time and your continued support of this critical issue.

Respectfully submitted  
Technology Advancement Center

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gregg Smith", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Gregg Smith  
Chief Executive Officer