



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Katie Savage | Secretary

TO: House Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Department of Information Technology
RE: House Bill 981- State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools
DATE: February 24, 2025
POSITION: Oppose

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
House Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary,

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is opposed to House Bill 981 - State Department of Education and Department of Information Technology - Evaluation on Artificial Intelligence in Public Schools. This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct an evaluation on the use and potential use of artificial intelligence (AI) in public schools and the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to assist MSDE in this evaluation. The bill as drafted will impose resource constraints and its impact on DoIT's ability to fulfill its core mission. **We list below some of our key concerns.**

The AI Enablement Team (AET) within DoIT, a newly formed team of three, is tasked with catalyzing AI enablement across state agencies. The team's primary focus is to drive the execution of the 2025 AI Strategy, as shared with the General Assembly, through the development of policies, procedures, infrastructure, procurement pathways, and experimentation frameworks. The broad and foundational work of AET is intended to support agencies in adopting AI responsibly within their respective domains.

Mandating DoIT's AET to conduct a comprehensive review of all AI systems in use by local school systems—effectively an AI inventory—would divert this small team's attention from its strategic statewide responsibilities. Such a requirement imposes a significant workload that AET is not resourced to take on in 2025, potentially undermining the broader AI enablement initiatives meant to benefit all state agencies.

Moreover, DoIT already anticipates supporting the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) by assisting in the evaluation of fellows, potential staff, or vendors capable of executing

this work. The anticipated outputs of AET's work—including policies and best practices—will likely provide MSDE with a foundational framework to conduct aspects of the AI review outlined in the bill. The most effective path forward is a targeted approach that leverages existing expertise and resources, specifically:

1. Establishing AI fellow(s) based within MSDE, who can focus on AI inventory and oversight for local school systems.
2. Creating a coalition comprising MSDE, Maryland civil society groups engaged in STEM and computing education, academic experts, philanthropic partners, and relevant private sector stakeholders.
3. DoIT playing a supportive role via its ongoing efforts, while removing the specific responsibilities assigned to DoIT in the bill.

By following this approach, the state can achieve the goals of HB 981 without disrupting the essential work of DoIT's AI Enablement Team. We respectfully urge the committee to consider these concerns and explore alternative strategies that align with DoIT's mission and capacity.

Best,

Melissa Leaman
Acting Secretary
Department of Information Technology