
House Appropriations Committee
March 31, 2026

SB 597 – Higher Education - Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland’s 16 community colleges, supports **SB 597** with amendments to ensure that Maryland’s community colleges are fully integrated into the State’s artificial intelligence and emerging technology workforce strategy. Maryland’s community colleges are already leading the State’s efforts to prepare a skilled workforce in cybersecurity and emerging technologies. Through initiatives such as the Cyber Workforce Accelerator, community colleges are delivering hands-on, industry-aligned training across all 16 institutions, equipping Marylanders with the skills needed to enter and advance in high-demand technology careers. These programs reflect strong partnerships with employers, workforce entities, and State agencies, and are designed to respond quickly to evolving labor market needs.

As artificial intelligence continues to transform industries, the infrastructure and partnerships established through existing cybersecurity and workforce training programs provide a strong foundation for expanding into AI and other emerging technologies. Community colleges are uniquely positioned to scale this work by offering short-term training, industry-recognized credentials, and accessible pathways for students, including working adults and career changers. MACC supports the bill’s goal of strengthening Maryland’s leadership in artificial intelligence through coordinated statewide efforts, including the creation of the Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership and regional technology extension hubs. These initiatives present important opportunities to expand workforce development and connect Marylanders to high-demand career pathways.

However, it will be critical to ensure that these efforts build on, and are aligned with, the strong workforce training infrastructure already in place at Maryland’s community colleges. Community colleges are the State’s primary providers of workforce education, and their full integration into the development and implementation of these initiatives will be essential to avoid duplication and maximize the State’s investment.

MACC respectfully requests amendments to strengthen the role of community colleges in the Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership and to ensure coordination with existing workforce development programs already operating across the State by explicitly naming community colleges as partners in the bill. With these amendments, SB 597 can strengthen Maryland’s leadership in artificial intelligence while ensuring that community colleges remain central partners in preparing the State’s workforce for the future economy. For these reasons, MACC respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report with **AMENDMENTS** on **SB 597**.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.