

**Written Testimony - Favorable**

**Jamie Shopland, Appointed Member, Maryland Longitudinal Data System  
Governing Board**

**3915 Braveheart Circle, Urbana, MD 21704**

February 2, 2026

RE: Testimony in Support

SB 56 / HB 293 – Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center – External Data  
Sharing – Multistate Reporting – Authorization

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee,

I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 56 / HB 293 as an appointed member of  
the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board.

SB 56 authorizes the MLDS Center, with explicit Governing Board approval and  
oversight, to participate in secure, multistate research partnerships that allow Maryland  
to better understand education and workforce outcomes that cross state lines. This  
authority is both timely and necessary, and it better positions Maryland to leverage  
broader data sets to make informed, data-driven policy decisions.

**Why Multistate Data Sharing Matters**

Nationally, state longitudinal data system leaders have recognized that there are limits  
to what any state can learn by examining its data in isolation. This is especially true for  
Maryland, which borders multiple states and the District of Columbia and is part of a  
highly interconnected regional economy.

Maryland students frequently cross state lines for postsecondary education,  
employment, and training opportunities. Without the ability to responsibly link data  
across jurisdictions, policymakers are left with an incomplete picture of educational  
attainment, workforce participation, and economic mobility. SB 56 allows Maryland to  
move beyond these limitations and to use broader, more comprehensive data to  
evaluate what is working, where gaps remain, and how public investments can be better  
aligned with outcomes.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Partiers like the Coleridge Initiative and the Administrative Data Research  
Facility (ADRF)**

SB 56 would allow the MLDS Center to participate in a multistate partnership facilitated  
by the Coleridge Initiative, a nonprofit organization that works with governments to  
improve the use of data for public decision-making. Coleridge operates the  
Administrative Data Research Facility (ADRF), a secure, cloud-based data environment

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that is authorized under the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP).

FedRAMP authorization requires rigorous security controls, continuous monitoring, and annual audits, providing a level of data security equivalent to that required of federal agencies. Participation through ADRF enables Maryland to benefit from larger, multistate datasets while maintaining strong safeguards around privacy and data security.

#### **Strong Governance, Oversight, and Privacy Protections**

Importantly, SB 56 does not grant blanket authority to share data. Instead, it places responsibility squarely with the MLDS Governing Board.

Before authorizing any data sharing, and annually thereafter, the Governing Board must determine that:

- The third-party data center meets or exceeds the MLDS Center's existing data security standards and remains FedRAMP authorized;
- Personally identifiable information is limited to only what is necessary for data matching, with privacy-enhancing techniques such as data hashing used whenever appropriate;
- Only de-identified data are used for analytic purposes;
- Only aggregate data are released in any reports or outputs;
- Aggregate data that could be identifiable due to small or unique populations are not reported; and
- Written data-sharing agreements are in place to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal privacy laws.

These requirements closely mirror the existing data use and disclosure protections already governing the MLDS Center under Education Article § 24-703(h)(2)–(4). In addition, the bill requires Governing Board approval of the specific data elements, datasets, and each proposed research or reporting project that seeks to use Maryland data.

This framework ensures that Maryland can responsibly leverage broader data sets while maintaining strong oversight, transparency, and public trust.

#### **Clarification Regarding the U.S. Census Bureau Provision**

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SB 56 also repeals a prior authorization allowing the MLDS Center to share data with the U.S. Census Bureau for participation in the Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes Explorer (PSEO). That authorization is no longer needed, as the Maryland Higher Education Commission has assumed responsibility for providing the necessary higher education data for PSEO participation. This change appropriately aligns statutory authority with current practice.

**Conclusion**

SB 56 represents a careful, forward-looking approach to strengthening Maryland's data infrastructure. It enables the State to responsibly access broader, multistate data sets, improves the quality of evidence available to policymakers, and supports better decision-making across education and workforce systems.

As a member of the MLDS Governing Board, I am confident that this legislation preserves strong privacy protections, reinforces Board oversight, and positions Maryland to lead in the responsible use of data for public good.

I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 56.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jamie Shopland

Appointed Member, Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board

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