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**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
March 11, 2026

**SB 597 – Higher Education - Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership**

**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

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The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland’s 16 community colleges, supports the goals of **SB 597** and respectfully offers several amendments to ensure that Maryland’s community colleges are fully included in the State’s artificial intelligence and emerging technology workforce strategy. Maryland’s community colleges play a critical role in preparing the State’s technology workforce. Community colleges educate and train many of the technicians, analysts, and professionals who support Maryland’s growing cybersecurity and technology sectors. As artificial intelligence continues to transform industries and create new workforce needs, community colleges will remain essential partners in expanding access to training and credentials that prepare Marylanders for these emerging careers.

MACC supports the bill’s efforts to expand workforce development in artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, including the expansion of the Cyber Warrior Diversity Program and the creation of the Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership and regional technology extension hubs. These initiatives present important opportunities to strengthen Maryland’s leadership in emerging technologies and expand pathways for students seeking careers in these fields.

To ensure the success of these initiatives and maximize workforce development opportunities across the State, MACC respectfully suggests several amendments. First, community colleges should have a formal role in the Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership. Community colleges are key workforce development partners and should have representation in the Partnership to ensure that statewide artificial intelligence strategies reflect the full range of higher education and workforce training providers. Second, the technology extension hubs established under the bill should include meaningful partnerships with community colleges. These hubs are intended to support workforce training and connect small businesses with emerging technology resources, and community colleges are well-positioned to deliver the skills training, certificates, and credentials needed to support those goals. Third, the implementation of artificial intelligence workforce initiatives under the bill should coordinate with existing cybersecurity and emerging technology workforce development programs at Maryland community colleges. Community colleges across the State are already building strong programs in cybersecurity and related fields, and aligning these efforts with new artificial intelligence initiatives will help ensure that the State’s workforce strategy is cohesive and effective.

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](mailto:bphillips@mdacc.org)) or Drew Jabin ([djabin@mdacc.org](mailto:djabin@mdacc.org)) with questions.