



Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2W
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 720/ House Bill 1057: Education - Artificial Intelligence – Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act) - SUPPORT

February 26, 2026

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

As President & Chief Executive Officer of the National Cryptologic Foundation (NCF), I write this letter in support of *Senate Bill 720/ House Bill 1057, entitled Education - Artificial Intelligence – Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act)*.

Artificial intelligence dates back to the 1960s, when Joseph Weizenbaum created the first AI chatbot, ELIZA. However, since the introduction of ChatGPT in late 2022, AI has taken the world by storm. AI has given the world access to a powerful tool, and *this* technology will continue to evolve in the years to come.

As new AI tools are released, companies, state governments, and educational institutions must be educated on how to use them properly and stay aware of the positive aspects and potential concerns as they are discovered. Understanding the benefits and risks of AI in Maryland's K-12 school systems will require guidance and education that promote safety, ethical standards, and best practices for our students, teachers, and administrators.

The enactment of the Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act in Maryland would have several significant impacts on the state. SB702/HB1057 would also require the State Department of Education to provide guidance on AI, emphasizing safe, responsible, equitable, and ethical use. This will help ensure that AI is integrated into educational systems in a manner that supports student learning and safety.

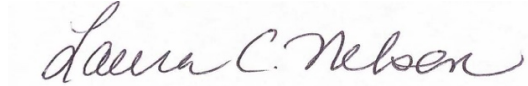
This legislation mandates that each county board designate an AI coordinator and that professional development for teachers on AI be provided by July 1, 2027. This will enhance educators' skills and knowledge in effectively using AI in their classrooms. Promoting teacher training in AI is no longer an option but instead a necessary, mandated reality.

A few years ago, NCF and our partner *Teach Cyber* provided resources and training programs to help Maryland teachers receive professional development in cybersecurity. Similar to those efforts, the time is now for Maryland to equip our teachers and administrators with the confidence and proficiency to use this evolving technology for the betterment of student learning and classroom safety.

Finally, this legislation establishes the Maryland AI Education Collaborative, composed of educators, administrators, parents, and students. The Collaborative will study the uses of AI in local school systems and make recommendations for guidance and policy adoption. These impacts aim to ensure that AI is used in education in ways that benefit students and educators alike, fostering a culture of AI literacy and responsible use in the classroom.

For these reasons, I am in full support of SB702/HB1057. This legislation was introduced last year; I strongly urge this committee to give it a **FAVORABLE** report and to enact it. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura C. Nelson". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Laura Nelson
President & Chief Executive Officer
National Cryptologic Foundation