

ANNE R. KAISER  
Legislative District 14  
Montgomery County

Vice Chair  
Appropriations Committee

Rules and Executive  
Nominations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 121  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3036  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3036  
Anne.Kaiser@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB1335: Department of Information Technology - Recruitment, Retention, and Compensation of Information Technology and Cybersecurity Professionals - Independent Study  
February 27, 2026**

Madam Chair Wells and distinguished members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you and offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 1335**. This bill is designed to be the first step to create a world class cadre of IT professionals embedded in all state agencies.

Maryland's ability to provide secure, efficient government services is currently under threat. The state is facing a systemic crisis in its technical workforce that undermines both fiscal responsibility and public safety. This challenge is defined by the following critical issues:

- *A Chronic Shortage of Expertise:* State agencies are operating without the necessary volume of qualified IT professionals required to manage a modern digital state.
- *Recruitment and Retention Barriers:* Maryland has long struggled to compete for skilled IT and cybersecurity talent, creating a revolving door of expertise that weakens institutional knowledge, all while salaries are compressed for existing employees.
- *Operational and Fiscal Consequences:* These workforce gaps have led to the mismanagement of major projects, hundreds of thousands of dollars in unused agency funds, and gaps in operational documentation.
- *Infrastructure Stagnation:* A lack of specialized staff has resulted in delays in modernizing the legacy systems that Marylanders rely on.
- *An Escalating Global Threat:* As ransomware, hacking, and cybercrimes grow in both frequency and sophistication across the country, the state's defensive capabilities are being outpaced by the evolution of digital crime.

To rectify these potential risks and strengthen our workforce, this bill will require the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to procure the services of a third-party entity to conduct an independent study, comparing the compensation of information technology (IT) and cybersecurity professionals at state agencies with comparable positions in other levels of government and in the private sector. Further, this study will evaluate the impact of salary

adjustments and other compensation benefits offered by the State for said professionals and recommend changes to improve recruitment and retention of the State technology workforce.

The alarm has been sounding for years. The depth of the State's IT workforce shortage is an established fact, exhaustively detailed in the 2025 and 2026 Operating Budget Analyses, the Office of Legislative Audit's 2024 and 2025 DoIT Reports, and the DLS 2023 Evaluation of Policies to Improve State Personnel Recruitment and Retention. We have the data; what we lack is implementation.

While initiatives like the Cyber Maryland Talent Strategy strengthen the broader talent pipeline, they lack specific strategies for state-level recruitment and compensation. Addressing this, TEDCO's Cybersecurity Talent Strategy Report explicitly recommends a formal study to advance skills-based hiring and retention within both the public and private sectors.

By undertaking this study and implementing evidence-based recommendations, the State can improve project oversight, maintain institutional knowledge, reduce reliance on costly contractors, and enhance continuity in critical technology initiatives, ultimately supporting operational efficiency, fiscal responsibility, and the protection of Marylanders' digital infrastructure.

I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 1335**. Thank you.