

The Honorable Melissa Wells  
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
142 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

### **House Bill 1239 – Critical Infrastructure Protection – Support**

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1239, which establishes a Critical Infrastructure Protection Branch within the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center.

My name is Michael Centrella. I served 25 years with the United States Secret Service, most recently as Assistant Director of Field Operations, where I oversaw investigative and protective operations nationwide. During my career, I led complex investigations involving cyber-enabled financial crimes, transnational criminal organizations, and threats impacting critical systems and public safety. Today, I work in the cybersecurity sector focused on strengthening public-sector and critical infrastructure resilience.

The threat environment facing Maryland's critical infrastructure is real and accelerating. Healthcare systems, transportation networks, schools, utilities, and local governments are increasingly targeted by sophisticated criminal organizations and foreign adversaries. These attacks are not simply technology disruptions—they are public safety events. They can delay emergency services, disrupt medical care, halt government operations, and undermine public confidence.

One of the most significant challenges states faces is fragmentation. Political subdivisions and infrastructure operators often operate independently, with varying levels of cybersecurity maturity and limited visibility into interconnected risks. Adversaries exploit these seams. A single compromised vendor or under-resourced local entity can become the gateway to broader, cascading disruption.

Senate Bill 825 addresses this challenge directly. By establishing a dedicated Critical Infrastructure Protection Branch, the State strengthens governance, centralizes coordination, and creates accountability for identifying and prioritizing risks across sectors. This structure is essential to move from reactive response to proactive protection.

Modern cyber risk extends beyond agency networks into supply chains, cloud environments, and operational technology systems. A coordinated, statewide approach to vulnerability identification and



threat prioritization will allow Maryland to allocate resources strategically and reduce systemic exposure before incidents occur.

House Bill 1239 positions Maryland to lead with foresight rather than respond in crisis. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support this important legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Centrella

Head of Public Policy, SecurityScorecard

For any questions or more information regarding SSC's position, please contact [Michael.Walsh@capitol-strategies.com](mailto:Michael.Walsh@capitol-strategies.com)