

SB482 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Dale Bowen

Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel
-a 501(c)3 Organization*



Legislative Committee

Dale Bowen

Email: dbowen@msfa.org

Cell: 410-610-5045

February 13, 2025

RE: SB 482

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman

Senator Jeff Waldstreicher
Vice Chairman

Judicial Proceedings Committee.
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland State Firefighters Association Legislative Committee, I am writing in support of SB 482 – Criminal Law – Interference with Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point.

Our Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and 911 systems serve as the first line of defense in protecting and serving our communities, as well as supporting our first responders. These systems are critical to ensuring rapid emergency response and safeguarding public safety.

This legislation strengthens existing protections for critical infrastructure, including our 911 system. Last year, the General Assembly passed important legislation to protect Public Safety Answering Points from attacks. SB 482 builds upon that foundation by broadening protections and increasing penalties for those who intentionally interfere with or disrupt these essential systems.

As stated, the 911 system is our first line of defense in protecting the public. There must be serious consequences for intentionally disrupting this vital service.

The Maryland State Firefighters' Association respectfully urges a favorable report on SB 482.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

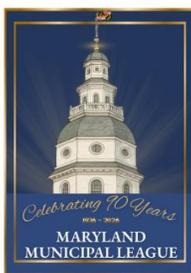
Dale Bowen

MSFA Legislative Committee

MML - FAV- SB 482.pdf

Uploaded by: Iris Ibegbulem

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: Senate Judicial Proceedings

DATE: February 17, 2026

POSITION: Favorable

BILL: SB 482

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports Senate Bill 482.

SB 482 expands the definition of critical infrastructure to include systems and assets, both physical or virtual, that are vital to a municipality's operations. The incapacity or destruction of such important systems would have a harmful effect on both the public and economic security of that municipality. The bill also creates stronger penalties by making it a felony to intentionally impair or destroy critical infrastructure or a public safety answering point. When convicted, violators will face substantial penalties including imprisonment and a significant fine. This ensures that those who threaten municipal essential systems are held accountable.

The State of Maryland has been hit by bad actors before with a memorable ransomware attack on the Maryland Department of Transportation in 2025. Anna Arundel County had a cyber incident in 2025 which affected their government operations and network while Baltimore City's ransomware attack in 2019 affected the city's most critical systems. Municipalities face an elevated risk of disruption to critical systems due to limited staffing capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to cyberattacks. Being able to charge and prosecute individuals who intentionally seek to harm municipalities and the communities they serve allows municipalities to better protect critical services and systems while maintaining public trust.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests that the committee provide Senate Bill 482 with a favorable report.

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

Iris Ibegbulem: Manager, Advocacy and Public Policy, irisi@mdmunicipal.org

MML represents 161 local governments and about 2 million Maryland residents.

SB482

Uploaded by: Janeen Birckhead

Position: FAV



WES MOORE
GOVERNOR
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

STATE OF MARYLAND
MILITARY DEPARTMENT
FIFTH REGIMENT ARMORY
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201-2288

JANEEN L. BIRCKHEAD
MAJOR GENERAL
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

February 17, 2026

Chair William C. Smith, Jr.
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Smith and Members of The Committee:

The Maryland Military Department respectfully requests a favorable report for Senate Bill 482 – Criminal Law – Interference with Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point.

The Maryland National Guard plays a vital role in defending the state's critical infrastructure. While our efforts focus on prevention and response, deterrence is an equally essential pillar of any comprehensive security strategy. Senate Bill 482 fills a critical gap in Maryland's legal framework by clearly defining critical infrastructure in state law and establishing felony-level penalties for those who intentionally interfere with or impair the functioning of these vital systems.

Without clear and significant legal consequences, our state remains an attractive target for those who would harm our infrastructure. When potential adversaries know that their actions will be met with serious prosecution, the calculus of risk changes. Deterrence works—but only when the consequences are real, clearly defined, and proportional to the harm that an attack on critical infrastructure can inflict on public safety and economic security.

The point of contact for this letter is Dr. Tony Campbell, reachable at (443) 956-0108, or tony.campbell1@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Janeen L. Birckhead in cursive script.

Janeen L. Birckhead
Major General, Maryland National Guard
The Adjutant General

SB 482 Written Testimony - JPR.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

MIKE MCKAY
Legislative District 1
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

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Williamsport Town Hall
Williamsport, Maryland

Senate Bill 482 – Criminal Law - Interference with Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point

February 17, 2026

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 482 takes a necessary and forward-looking step to protect Maryland’s critical infrastructure and emergency response systems from intentional cyber interference. As cyberattacks grow more sophisticated and increasingly target essential systems—such as utilities, health care facilities, schools, and public safety answering points, Maryland law must clearly prohibit conduct that disrupts or denies access to these vital services. This bill closes gaps in existing statute by explicitly addressing acts intended to impair critical infrastructure or emergency communications, ensuring that bad actors who deliberately endanger public safety can be held appropriately accountable.

Importantly, SB 482 balances strong enforcement with reasonable safeguards by preserving exemptions for legitimate research, testing, and educational activities. The bill focuses squarely on intentional, unauthorized conduct that threatens public safety, economic security, and essential government functions, while avoiding overreach into lawful cybersecurity work. By strengthening penalties for interference with critical infrastructure and 911 systems, this legislation reinforces Maryland’s commitment to protecting residents, first responders, and essential services from disruptions that could have catastrophic consequences.

I thank you for your time and I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike McKay'.

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

Sponsor Amendment

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV



SB0482/653226/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

16 FEB 26
16:43:58

BY: Senator McKay

(To be offered in the Judicial Proceedings Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 482

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in lines 4 and 6, in each instance, after “from” insert “intentionally, willfully, and without authorization”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 5, in line 3, after “not” insert “INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION”; and in line 6, after “NOT” insert “INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION”.

Sponsor Amendment Reprint

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

SENATE BILL 482

E1

6lr2984
CF HB 593

By: **Senator McKay**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety**
3 **Answering Point**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from intentionally, willfully, and without
5 authorization committing a certain act with the intent to
6 interrupt or impair the functioning of critical infrastructure; prohibiting a person
7 from intentionally, willfully, and without authorization committing a certain act that
8 denies access to an authorized user of or
9 interrupts or impairs the functioning of critical infrastructure or a public safety
answering point; and generally relating to interference with critical infrastructure
or a public safety answering point.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

11 Article – Criminal Law

12 Section 7–302(a), (c), and (d)

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Criminal Law**

18 7–302.

19 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

20 (2) “Access” means to instruct, communicate with, store data in, retrieve or
21 intercept data from, or otherwise use the resources of a computer program, computer
22 system, or computer network.

23 (3) (i) “Aggregate amount” means a direct loss of property or services
24 incurred by a victim.

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 482 as amended by SB0482/653226/1 02/16/26 at 4:43 PM

1 (ii) "Aggregate amount" includes:

2 1. the value of any money, property, or service lost, stolen, or
3 rendered unrecoverable by the crime; or

4 2. any actual reasonable expenditure incurred by the victim
5 to verify whether a computer program, computer, computer system, or computer network
6 was altered, acquired, damaged, deleted, disrupted, or destroyed by access in violation of
7 this section.

8 (4) (i) "Computer" means an electronic, magnetic, optical, organic, or
9 other data processing device or system that performs logical, arithmetic, memory, or
10 storage functions.

11 (ii) "Computer" includes property, a data storage facility, or a
12 communications facility that is directly related to or operated with a computer.

13 (iii) "Computer" does not include an automated typewriter, a
14 typesetter, or a portable calculator.

15 (5) "Computer control language" means ordered statements that direct a
16 computer to perform specific functions.

17 (6) "Computer database" means a representation of information,
18 knowledge, facts, concepts, or instructions that:

19 (i) is intended for use in a computer, computer system, or computer
20 network; and

21 (ii) 1. is being prepared or has been prepared in a formalized
22 manner; or

23 2. is being produced or has been produced by a computer,
24 computer system, or computer network.

25 (7) "Computer network" means the interconnection of one or more
26 computers through:

27 (i) the use of a satellite, microwave, line, or other communication
28 medium; and

29 (ii) terminals or a complex consisting of two or more interconnected
30 computers regardless of whether the interconnection is continuously maintained.

31 (8) "Computer program" means an ordered set of instructions or
32 statements that may interact with related data and, when executed in a computer system,

3 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 482 as amended by SB0482/653226/1 02/16/26 at 4:43 PM

1 causes a computer to perform specified functions.

2 (9) "Computer services" includes computer time, data processing, and
3 storage functions.

4 (10) "Computer software" means a computer program, instruction,
5 procedure, or associated document regarding the operation of a computer system.

6 (11) "Computer system" means one or more connected or unconnected
7 computers, peripheral devices, computer software, data, or computer programs.

8 (12) **"CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE" MEANS SYSTEMS AND ASSETS,
9 WHETHER PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL, THAT ARE SO VITAL TO THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR
10 A MUNICIPALITY THAT THE INCAPACITY OR DESTRUCTION OF ONE OR MORE
11 COMPONENTS WOULD HAVE A DEBILITATING IMPACT ON:**

12 (I) PUBLIC SECURITY;

13 (II) ECONOMIC SECURITY;

14 (III) PUBLIC HEALTH;

15 (IV) PUBLIC SAFETY;

16 (V) PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION; OR

17 (VI) PUBLIC UTILITIES.

18 (13) "Ransomware" means a computer or data contaminant, encryption, or
19 lock that:

20 (i) is placed or introduced without authorization into a computer, a
21 computer network, or a computer system; and

22 (ii) restricts access by an authorized person to a computer, computer
23 data, a computer network, or a computer system in a manner that results in the person
24 responsible for the placement or introduction of the contaminant, encryption, or lock
25 demanding payment of money or other consideration to remove the contaminant,
26 encryption, or lock.

27 (c) (1) A person may not intentionally, willfully, and without authorization:

28 (i) access, attempt to access, cause to be accessed, or exceed the
29 person's authorized access to all or part of a computer network, computer control language,
30 computer, computer software, computer system, computer service, or computer database;
31 or

4 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 482 as amended by SB0482/653226/1 02/16/26 at 4:43 PM

1 (ii) copy, attempt to copy, possess, or attempt to possess the contents
2 of all or part of a computer database accessed in violation of item (i) of this paragraph.

3 (2) A person may not commit an act prohibited by paragraph (1) of this
4 subsection with the intent to:

5 (i) cause the malfunction or interrupt the operation of all or any part
6 of a computer, computer network, computer control language, computer software, computer
7 system, computer service, or computer data; or

8 (ii) alter, damage, or destroy all or any part of data or a computer
9 program stored, maintained, or produced by a computer, computer network, computer
10 software, computer system, computer service, or computer database.

11 (3) A person may not intentionally, willfully, and without authorization:

12 (i) possess, identify, or attempt to identify a valid access code; or

13 (ii) publicize or distribute a valid access code to an unauthorized
14 person.

15 (4) A person may not commit an act prohibited under this subsection with
16 the intent to interrupt or impair the functioning of:

17 (i) the State government;

18 (ii) a service, device, or system related to the production,
19 transmission, delivery, or storage of electricity or natural gas in the State that is owned,
20 operated, or controlled by a person other than a public service company, as defined in §
21 1–101 of the Public Utilities Article;

22 (iii) a service provided in the State by a public service company, as
23 defined in § 1–101 of the Public Utilities Article;

24 (iv) a health care facility, as defined in § 18–338.1 of the
25 Health – General Article; or

26 (v) a public school, as defined in § 1–101 of the Education Article.

27 (5) (i) This paragraph does not apply to a person who has a bona fide
28 scientific, educational, governmental, testing, news, or other similar justification for
29 possessing ransomware.

30 (ii) A person may not knowingly possess ransomware with the intent
31 to use the ransomware for the purpose of introduction into the computer, computer

5 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 482 as amended by SB0482/653226/1 02/16/26 at 4:43 PM

1 network, or computer system of another person without the authorization of the other
2 person.

3 (6) A person may not INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION commit
4 an act prohibited under this subsection with
5 the intent to interrupt or impair the functioning of CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR a
6 public safety answering point, as defined in § 1-301 of the Public Safety Article.

6 (7) A PERSON MAY NOT INTENTIONALLY, WILLFULLY, AND WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION COMMIT
7 AN ACT PROHIBITED UNDER THIS
8 SUBSECTION THAT DENIES ACCESS TO AN AUTHORIZED USER OF OR INTERRUPTS OR
9 IMPAIRS THE FUNCTIONING OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OR A PUBLIC SAFETY
10 ANSWERING POINT, AS DEFINED IN § 1-301 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE.

10 (d) (1) A person who violates subsection (c)(1) of this section is guilty of a
11 misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine
12 not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

13 (2) A person who violates subsection (c)(2) or (3) of this section:

14 (i) if the aggregate amount of the loss is \$10,000 or more, is guilty
15 of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not
16 exceeding \$10,000 or both; or

17 (ii) if the aggregate amount of the loss is less than \$10,000, is guilty
18 of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a
19 fine not exceeding \$5,000 or both.

20 (3) A person who violates subsection (c)(4) of this section:

21 (i) if the aggregate amount of the loss is \$10,000 or more, is guilty
22 of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not
23 exceeding \$100,000 or both; or

24 (ii) if the aggregate amount of the loss is less than \$10,000, is guilty
25 of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a
26 fine not exceeding \$25,000 or both.

27 (4) A person who violates subsection (c)(5) of this section is guilty of a
28 misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine
29 not exceeding \$5,000 or both.

30 (5) A person who violates subsection (c)(6) of this section is guilty of a felony
31 and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding
32 \$25,000 or both.

6 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 482 as amended by SB0482/653226/1 02/16/26 at 4:43 PM

1 (6) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES SUBSECTION (C)(7) OF THIS SECTION IS
2 GUILTY OF A FELONY AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT
3 EXCEEDING 10 YEARS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$50,000 OR BOTH.

4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
5 October 1, 2026.

Letter of Support for SB0482.pdf

Uploaded by: S P

Position: FAV

MIKE MCKAY
Legislative District 1
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Joint Committees
Administrative, Executive,
and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

Williamsport Office
2N Conococheque Street
Williamsport Town Hall
Williamsport, Maryland

February 10, 2026

RE: Fire/EMS Coalition Support for SB0482

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

The Fire/EMS Coalition would like to express their support for **Senate Bill 482: Criminal Law - Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point**. This bill will prohibit a person from intentionally, willfully, and without authorization committing a certain act with the intent to interrupt or impair the functioning of critical infrastructure; providing that a person convicted of violating the Act is guilty of a felony and is subject to imprisonment of up to 10 years or a fine not to exceed \$50,000, or both.

The Fire/EMS Coalition supports Senate Bill 482.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike McKay".

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

Voting Organizations:

Maryland Fire Chief's Association (MFCA)
Maryland State Firefighter's Association (MSFA)
State Fire Marshal (OSFM)
Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI)
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMMS)
Metro Fire Chief's Association
Professional Firefighters of Maryland

Our Mission Statement

The Maryland Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to offer support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.

MCPA_MSA SB 482 - Interference With Critical Infra

Uploaded by: Samira Jackson

Position: FAV



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 17, 2026

RE: **SB 482 - Criminal Law - Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public
Safety Answering Point**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 482**. This bill clarifies and strengthens existing law by explicitly criminalizing intentional interference with critical infrastructure. As reflected in the bill's structure, outdated or insufficient statutory language is removed, while new provisions are added to clearly define prohibited conduct and establish appropriate criminal penalties for actions that threaten essential systems relied upon by the public every day.

Critical infrastructure, including utilities, transportation systems, communications networks, and other essential facilities, is foundational to public safety, economic stability, and emergency response. SB 482 appropriately recognizes that intentional disruption of these systems poses serious risks not only to property, but to human life. By adding clear statutory language that criminalizes interference with critical infrastructure, the bill closes gaps in current law and ensures that dangerous conduct can be addressed before it escalates into widespread harm.

MCPA and MSA support the inclusion of the bill's language into existing law and believe that intentional interference with critical infrastructure should be treated as a serious criminal offense. SB 482 strikes the appropriate balance between modernizing the statute and strengthening public safety protections. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORTS SB 482** and urge a **FAVORABLE** committee report.

FINAL 2026 MD SB 483 Testimony - Sarah Anderson.pd

Uploaded by: Sarah Anderson

Position: FAV



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Free Markets. Real

Testimony from:

Sarah Anderson, Associate Director, Criminal Justice & Civil Liberties, R Street Institute

In SUPPORT of Senate Bill 483: “Clean Slate Act of 2026”

February 17, 2026

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Chairman Smith and members of the committee,

My name is Sarah Anderson, and I am the associate director of criminal justice and civil liberties policy for the R Street Institute (RSI), which is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public policy organization. Our mission at RSI is to engage in research and outreach to promote free markets and limited, effective government in many areas, including in the field of criminal justice and civil liberties. We have a particularly vested interest in creating a system that holds offenders accountable to their actions, yet still allows for successful rehabilitation and an opportunity to truly leave life’s mistakes behind when earned. This is why we have a strong interest today in Senate Bill 483, also known as the “Clean Slate Act.”

Under this proposed legislation, certain criminal records would be automatically expunged after a designated amount of time has passed, depending on the offense, and provided the individual has satisfied all of the requirements of their case.¹ It is important to note that the bill does not require the physical destruction of the records, rather it shields them from public view. Expunged records remain available to certain government entities when necessary.

Specifically, the legislation would require the judiciary to identify and shield from public view the records of individuals who have non-convictions and/or arrests after three years have passed, as well as the records of individuals who have eligible misdemeanors after seven years have passed. Thereafter, the judiciary would be required to identify new eligible cases each month and notify the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and then shield these new eligible records within thirty days of the notification. This creates a perpetual automatic expungement process.

Research proves that individuals who remain crime-free for five to seven years without further offenses, are no more likely to reoffend than those without a criminal record, making this legislation a sensible,

¹ Maryland General Assembly, 2026 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 483, Last Accessed February 11, 2026. <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/SB0483>.

evidence-based policy.^{2,3} Additionally, those who have arrest or non-conviction records and are innocent in the eyes of the law and of their peers should certainly not have records following them around in perpetuity.

To grasp the importance of shielding criminal records from the public after individuals remain crime-free for a set period, one must understand the lasting consequences and barriers faced by those with records, even years after completing their sentence.⁴ One of the greatest challenges faced by people with criminal records—affecting nearly 22 percent of Maryland's adult population—is the enduring hurdle to accessing basic life necessities, such as employment, housing, and education.⁵ In fact, there are more than 40,000 state and federal regulatory and legal restrictions that limit opportunities for those with criminal records with regards to employment, business and licensing, housing, and education, among other things.⁶ These create negative outcomes for those impacted. For example, 94 percent of employers use background checks when hiring, and an arrest or conviction record reduces the chances of a callback or job offer by nearly 50 percent.^{7,8}

While petition-based record sealing already exists in Maryland, it is severely underutilized.⁹ The novel aspect of this legislation is the automation of the process, which means that everybody who is eligible will have their record sealed. Though 40 percent of Marylanders with criminal records are eligible for petition-based sealing, fewer than 2 percent have secured it due to the burdensome process or lack of awareness.^{10,11}

This is why the automated sealing process set up in this bill is critical to achieving positive outcomes.

² Alfred Blumstein and Kiminori Nakamura, “‘Redemption’ in an Era of Widespread Criminal Background Checks,” *National Institute of Justice Journal*, 263 (June 2009). <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/226872.pdf>

³ J.J. Prescott and Sonja B. Starr, “The Power of a Clean Slate,” *Regulation* 43:2 (Summer 2020) pp. 28-34. <https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3474&context=articles>

⁴ Gary Hunter, “Destined to Fail: the Negative Effect of Collateral Consequence Laws,” *Prison Legal News*, August 10, 2016.

<https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2016/aug/10/destined-fail-negative-effect-collateral-consequence-laws/>

⁵ “Clean Slate in Maryland,” The Clean Slate Initiative, 2025. <https://www.cleanslateinitiative.org/maryland#factsheet>

⁶ “A Re-Introduction to the National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction (NICCC) and the Clean Slate Clearinghouse,” Bureau of Justice Assistance: National Reentry Resource Center, April 12, 2023. <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/multimedia/re-introduction-national-inventory-collateral-consequences-conviction-niccc-and-clean>

⁷ Ariel Nelson, “Broken Records Redux: How Errors by Criminal Background Check Companies Continue to Harm Consumers Seeking Jobs and Housing,” *National Consumer Law Center*, December 10, 2019. <https://www.nclc.org/resources/report-broken-records-redux/>

⁸ Devah Pager, et al., “Sequencing Disadvantage: Barriers to Employment Facing Young Black and White Men with Criminal Records,” *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 623:1 (May 2009), pp. 195-213. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23459367/>

⁹ Jack Ford, “Maryland Clean Slate Act Proposed to Streamline Record Expungement Process,” *WBOC*, February 21, 2024. https://www.wboc.com/news/maryland-clean-slate-act-proposed-to-streamline-record-expungement-process/article_9590afea-d10a-11ee-b523-d3ed4fb4d74e.html

¹⁰ “Clean Slate in Maryland,” The Clean Slate Initiative, 2025. <https://www.cleanslateinitiative.org/maryland#factsheet>

¹¹ “The Maryland Second Chance Expungement Gap,” *Paper Prisons*, <https://paperprisons.org/states/MD.html>

Comparable automated record sealing laws have been passed in 13 other states since 2018, and survey data indicates that those who have had their records sealed are already benefiting dramatically from the policy, particularly relating to factors that reduce reoffense rates, such as employment, housing, and education.^{12,13} Of those who received automated record relief in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Utah, 42 percent reported improvements in work, employment, finances, or public assistance, 24 percent in housing, and 22 percent in education. More holistically, 35 percent report improvement in personal and family relationships, and 34 percent report improvement in health, mental health, or self-esteem. All of these factors not only improve the lives of those with the criminal record, but also the lives of those around them, their broader community, and the state overall.

SB 483 offers a chance to bring the benefits of clean slate legislation to the state of Maryland. For these reasons, we strongly support SB 483 and urge the committee to issue a favorable report.¹⁴

Thank you,

Sarah Anderson
Associate Director, Criminal Justice & Civil Liberties
R Street Institute
sanderson@rstreet.org

¹² “The Impacts of Clean Slate Laws in Pennsylvania, Utah, and Michigan,” The Clean Slate Initiative, October 30, 2024. <https://www.cleanslateinitiative.org/research-data-publications/yougov-survey-report>

¹³ Amy L. Solomon, et al., “Understanding the Challenges of Prisoner Reentry,” The Urban Institute, March 24, 2006. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/understanding-challenges-prisoner-reentry>

¹⁴ Christi Smith, “The Pathway to Prosperity: How Clean Slate Legislation Enhances Public Safety and Stimulates the Economy,” *R Street Policy Study* No. 279, March 2023. <https://www.rstreet.org/research/the-pathway-to-prosperity-how-clean-slate-legislation-enhances-public-safety-and-stimulates-the-economy/>

SB0482-JPR_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 482

*Criminal Law - Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a
Public Safety Answering Point*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 17, 2026

From: Kevin Kinnally & Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 482.

SB 482 bolsters Maryland's ability to prevent, deter, and respond to threats against critical infrastructure. Counties support this bill because disruptions to these systems create immediate public safety risks and can cascade across emergency response, public health, and basic services.

Counties operate and maintain essential infrastructure that underpins public safety, mobility, and basic services, including water and wastewater systems, public buildings, emergency operations facilities, transit operations, local road systems, and public safety networks. Counties also partner directly with private utilities and regional providers to coordinate security planning and emergency response.

Emergency managers plan for storms, floods, and major emergencies. But targeted disruption creates a different kind of threat, one designed to interrupt basic services and strain response capacity. This bill addresses that gap by expanding Maryland's protections for critical infrastructure and strengthening the State's ability to deter and prosecute intentional interference with essential systems.

Counties have invested heavily in resilience and continuity planning for these systems, including physical security upgrades, redundancy, and incident response coordination. SB 482 complements that work by providing clearer legal tools to address intentional interference and by reinforcing that critical infrastructure protection remains a shared priority across all levels of government.

This bill provides clear consequences for intentional interference, supports coordinated response, and protects essential systems that Maryland residents depend on. For these reasons, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 482.

MD 2026 SB 482 Columbia Gas Testimony Final.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott Waitlevertch

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE – Senate Bill 482
Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc. (Columbia) supports SB 482 as introduced. The legislation amends Maryland law to prohibit a person from intentionally, willfully, and without authorization interrupting or impairing the functioning of critical infrastructure, which includes natural gas utility equipment, facilities and pipelines. Under the proposed legislation, a person who denies access, interrupts or impairs the functioning of critical infrastructure is guilty of a felony and subject to imprisonment or a fine or both.

Columbia supports public policies protecting its equipment, facilities and pipelines from attack or interference. Ensuring we can safely and reliably provide energy to our customers is our priority. Columbia works with industry, federal and state agencies and organizations to develop standards and best practices to manage cybersecurity risks and to promote the protection of our critical infrastructure.

Unfortunately, there have been attacks on utility facilities and infrastructure. These attacks can be carried out by various actors including terrorists, extremist groups, disgruntled individuals, nation-states seeking to destabilize a region, or criminals aiming to disrupt operations for personal gain.

Examples include shooting incidents at power substations in the United States where individuals have targeted electrical substations with gunfire, causing power outages. There has also been vandalism of energy infrastructure where unknown actors have deliberately damaged electrical equipment or transformers.

Data from Check Point Research indicates U.S. utilities faced a near 70% jump in cyber-attacks in 2024 from 2023, underlining the escalating threats to critical infrastructure. Power infrastructure across the U.S. is becoming increasingly vulnerable as the grid expands rapidly to meet surging demand for power and assets are digitalized.

In addition, in October 2024 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) highlighted in its 2025 Homeland Threat Assessment (HTA) that domestic and foreign adversaries are almost certain to continue posing threats to the integrity of the nation's critical infrastructure over the next year. This is partly because they believe that targeting these sectors could have widespread effects on U.S. industries and the standard of living.

Mitigating attacks and interference with critical infrastructure is a joint effort between at-risk industries and federal, state and local governments. Legislation such as SB 482 can assist in the possible prevention of future attacks and interference of critical infrastructure.

Columbia believes the requirements of Senate Bill 482 are appropriately and reasonably crafted policies related to the protection of Maryland's critical infrastructure and supports the legislation as introduced.

February 17, 2026

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FirstEnergy FAV - Judicial - SB482 - Critical Infr

Uploaded by: Timothy Troxell

Position: FAV

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SUPPORT – Senate Bill 0482
Criminal Law – Interference with Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Potomac Edison, a subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corp., serves approximately 293,000 customers in all or parts of seven Maryland counties (Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, and Washington). FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability, and operational excellence. Its electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia.

Favorable

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy supports Senate Bill 0482 - *Criminal Law – Interference with Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point*. This legislation addresses threats to actions intended to obstruct the access to, or operation of, critical infrastructure by codifying both its definition as well as the penalty for violations.

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy requests a Favorable report on SB-482. Enhancing the security and reliability of Maryland's critical infrastructure, particularly the electric grid that serves our communities, is crucial.

The electric grid is a vital component of Maryland's critical infrastructure. It ensures the continuous delivery of electricity to homes, businesses, government agencies, and other essential services. Any intentional interference with the network could lead to significant disruptions – which can then affect public safety, economic stability, and the well-being of our customers.

Senate Bill 0482 aims to strengthen legal protections against actions that intentionally disrupt or impair critical infrastructure operations. By prohibiting such actions and establishing penalties for violations, the bill serves as a deterrent against malicious activities targeting essential services. The proposed legislation also aligns with industry efforts to safeguard critical infrastructure. It complements existing measures by providing a legal framework to address intentional disruptions, thereby supporting our ability to maintain reliable electric service.

Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy believes Senate Bill 0482 takes a necessary step toward ensuring the security and resilience of Maryland's critical infrastructure. Given the sensitive nature of utility critical infrastructure, the need to deter actions that may harm it, and the benefits of having clearly defined penalties for taking such actions, we urge the committee to support this bill. We appreciate your consideration of our perspective on this issue and believe that protecting the essential services upon which our communities depend is vital.

For the above reasons, Potomac Edison / FirstEnergy respectfully request a Favorable vote on SB-482.

SB 482_Chesapeake Utilities_Fav. (02.17.26) (Final

Uploaded by: Tyler Majchrzak

Position: FAV



February 17, 2026

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

**SB 482 – Criminal Law – Interference With Critical Infrastructure or a Public Safety Answering Point
Statement in Support**

Chesapeake Utilities of Maryland, Inc. (“Chesapeake”) provides natural gas local distribution service to approximately 34,000 customers across Maryland's Eastern Shore (including Cecil, Dorchester, Caroline, Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties). Chesapeake respectfully **SUPPORTS** SB 482, legislation that significantly strengthens Maryland’s criminal protections for critical infrastructure—including the essential natural gas systems that power homes, businesses, and public institutions statewide.

SB 482 fortifies existing computer-crime statutes, ensuring that any intentional, unauthorized attempt to impair or disrupt critical infrastructure or public safety answering points (PSAPs) is met with the gravity it warrants. By elevating these offenses to felonies, the bill imposes penalties of up to 10 years’ imprisonment and a \$50,000 fine for unauthorized digital access that denies rightful users or disrupts critical operations.

SB 482 defines “**critical infrastructure**” as systems and assets—physical or virtual—whose disruption could severely impact public safety, health, economic security, transportation, or utilities. Natural gas systems are a cornerstone of this definition, as our infrastructure ensures heating reliability, industrial productivity, emergency response capability, and essential quality-of-life services for millions of Marylanders.

With cyber threats growing in both frequency and sophistication, utilities are increasingly vulnerable to unauthorized access to critical operational technology, such as pipeline monitoring, pressure control, and dispatching systems. While utilities make substantial investments in cybersecurity, robust state-level deterrence is an indispensable layer of defense. SB 482 ensures that those who deliberately target utility systems are held accountable under strong criminal statutes—an enhanced deterrent that is crucial for safeguarding reliability and public trust.

SB 482 is a vital **modernization** of Maryland’s criminal code, aligning with federal cybersecurity priorities, advancing protection of critical infrastructure, and ensuring that those who intentionally threaten essential services are met with firm, appropriate consequences.

On behalf of Chesapeake and our thousands of dedicated employees and their families—who contribute daily to the communities where they live, work, and serve—we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 482.

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation
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