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**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON HB557**

TO: Ways and Means Committee  
FROM: Maryland Secretary of Labor Portia Wu  
DATE: March 25, 2026  
BILL: **HB 293 / SB 56 – Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center –  
External Data Sharing – Multistate Reporting – Authorization**

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**MDL POSITION: SUPPORT**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of **HB 293 / SB 56** in my capacity as **Chair of the Governing Board of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center**.

Governor Moore has been clear that Maryland's long-term success depends on our ability to remain competitive, ensure the government operates efficiently, and make disciplined, data-driven investments that deliver real returns for taxpayers. HB 293 / SB 56 directly advances these goals by strengthening the State's ability to understand how our education and workforce systems are performing in a highly interconnected regional economy.

Maryland does not operate in isolation. Our students and workers regularly cross state lines to pursue education and employment opportunities, particularly within the Capital Region. Yet today, Maryland's ability to evaluate the outcomes of our investments in education and workforce development is constrained by state-only data. This bill authorizes the MLDS Governing Board to permit secure, multistate data sharing that will allow policymakers to better assess outcomes, identify what is working, and more strategically target resources where they will have the greatest impact.

At a time of significant budget pressures, this type of analysis is essential. HB 293 / SB 56 helps ensure that Maryland is getting a strong return on its investments by enabling more intentional, evidence-based decision-making. By improving our understanding of education-to-workforce pathways across state lines, the State will be better positioned to align programs with labor market needs, reduce inefficiencies, and prioritize strategies that deliver measurable results.

Just as important, this legislation preserves Maryland's strong commitment to data privacy and responsible governance. It requires Governing Board approval of all data elements and research projects, mandates the use of privacy-enhancing techniques, limits the use of personally identifiable information to what is strictly necessary for data matching, and ensures that only de-identified, aggregated data are used and released. These protections mirror existing statutory safeguards and reflect best practices in secure data stewardship.

Ultimately, the goal of this work is straightforward: when Maryland makes smart, strategic investments in education and workforce development, our children are better positioned to succeed, our workers are more competitive, and the State benefits from a stronger, more resilient economy. HB 293 / SB 56 gives Maryland the tools to make those investments with greater confidence and clarity.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on **HB 293 / SB 56**.

Sincerely,

**Portia Wu**

Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor  
Chair, Governing Board  
Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center