



METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE COUNCIL AFL-CIO Unions

HB 1057 - Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act)

Ways and Means Committee

March 4th, 2026

Favorable

To: Chair & members of the House Ways and Means Committee

From: Courtney Jenkins, President, Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions

My name is Courtney Jenkins, and I am proud to serve as President of the Metro Baltimore AFL-CIO, representing thousands of union members and working families across our region. On behalf of our labor community, I urge a favorable report on House Bill 1057, the Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act.

Artificial intelligence is already reshaping our workplaces. From healthcare and transportation to public service and skilled trades. The question before us is not whether AI will impact Maryland's economy; it is whether we will prepare our students and educators to lead in that economy or leave them scrambling to catch up. HB 1057 takes a responsible, proactive approach by ensuring that AI is integrated into our public schools safely, ethically, and equitably.

Right now, school districts are navigating AI with little statewide guidance. That patchwork approach risks deepening inequities, where students in well-resourced districts have structured, thoughtful exposure to emerging technology while others are left without guardrails or support. By directing the Maryland State Department of Education to establish clear guidelines and create a centralized platform for students, parents, and educators, this bill ensures consistency, transparency, and accountability. A child's zip code should never determine the quality of their digital education.

From a labor perspective, HB 1057 is about workforce readiness and protecting the dignity of work in a rapidly changing economy. Our members see firsthand how technology can either empower workers or displace them. The difference lies in training, standards, and thoughtful implementation. By requiring professional development and creating the Maryland AI Education Collaborative, this legislation ensures that educators are equipped to teach AI literacy not as a gimmick, but as a foundational workforce skill. Preparing students to understand and responsibly use AI strengthens Maryland's long-term economic competitiveness and helps ensure that tomorrow's jobs remain good jobs.



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Importantly, HB 1057 also includes safeguards around ethical procurement, bias, and data privacy. Working families deserve to know that new technology introduced into classrooms will not compromise their children's personal information or reinforce harmful inequities. Establishing annual certifications and oversight mechanisms is a common sense way to prevent problems before they occur.

The Metro Baltimore AFL-CIO believes that innovation and worker protection must go hand in hand. HB 1057 reflects that balance. It positions Maryland to lead responsibly in AI adoption while ensuring that our educators are supported and our students are prepared for the jobs of the future.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 1057. Thank you for your consideration.

Courtney Jenkins
President
Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO