

BILL: House Bill 5
TITLE: State Government - State and Local Government Employees and Contractors - Cybersecurity Training
DATE: March 1, 2022
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS
COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports House Bill 5 to establish the State Cybersecurity Awareness and Training Program with amendments to address concerns regarding local decision-making as to the administration of cyber security training and other issues.

MABE, on behalf of all local boards of education, certainly appreciates and supports the need for increased investments and opportunities for state and local employees to participate in cyber security training. School systems throughout the nation, and in Maryland, have experienced first-hand the dire consequences of cyberattacks. These experiences are having significant impacts on school system budgets in areas including technology, staffing, professional development, insurance, and risk management. House Bill 5 would meaningfully enhance the State's approach to providing the resources needed to ensure continuous improvement in cybersecurity across all state agencies and among Maryland's diverse array of local governments and school systems.

One provision of the bill, however, raises a concern regarding the breadth and scope of the mandated trainings. Specifically, the bill includes a mandate to require each employee whose job duties include accessing a computer system or data base to complete at least four trainings each year. MABE agrees that such trainings are needed for certain employees and is requesting an amendment to clarify that the mandate would apply to local employees identified by the local government or school system. Local boards believe this amendment would allow for appropriate local discretion to define the scope and application of the training mandate. Similarly, given the potential for an enormous number of employees being required to participate in annual training, MABE requests local discretion on the number of distinct trainings as well.

MABE looks forward to the Cyber Security Council's development of standards for the Cybersecurity Awareness and Training Program, including the certification of specific training programs, and to ongoing collaboration with the State to build a robust and resilient cybersecurity bulwark against cyberattacks and their disruptive, costly, and at times devastating impacts on Maryland's public school systems.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 5, with the amendments described above.