

HOUSE BILL 445

E1
HB 70/24 – JUD

5lr0898
CF SB 81

By: **Delegate Hill**

Introduced and read first time: January 16, 2025

Assigned to: Judiciary

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 25, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Interference With a Public Safety Answering Point – Penalties**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from taking certain actions with the intent to
4 interrupt or impair the functioning of a public safety answering point; prohibiting a
5 person from taking certain actions that interrupt or impair the functioning of a
6 public safety answering point; and generally relating to public safety answering
7 points.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Criminal Law
10 Section 7–302(c) and (d)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Criminal Law**

16 7–302.

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

18 (i) access, attempt to access, cause to be accessed, or exceed the
19 person’s authorized access to all or part of a computer network, computer control language,

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 computer, computer software, computer system, computer service, or computer database;
2 or

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

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

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

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

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

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

15 (ii) publicize or distribute a valid access code to an unauthorized
16 person.

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

19 (i) the State government;

20 (ii) a service, device, or system related to the production,
21 transmission, delivery, or storage of electricity or natural gas in the State that is owned,
22 operated, or controlled by a person other than a public service company, as defined in §
23 1–101 of the Public Utilities Article;

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

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

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

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

32 (ii) A person may not knowingly possess ransomware with the intent

1 to use the ransomware for the purpose of introduction into the computer, computer
2 network, or computer system of another person without the authorization of the other
3 person.

4 **(6) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT AN ACT PROHIBITED UNDER THIS**
5 **SUBSECTION WITH THE INTENT TO INTERRUPT OR IMPAIR THE FUNCTIONING OF A**
6 **PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT, AS DEFINED IN § 1-301 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY**
7 **ARTICLE.**

8 **(7) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT AN ACT PROHIBITED UNDER THIS**
9 **SUBSECTION THAT INTERRUPTS OR IMPAIRS THE FUNCTIONING OF A PUBLIC**
10 **SAFETY ANSWERING POINT, AS DEFINED IN § 1-301 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY**
11 **ARTICLE.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

32 **(5) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES SUBSECTION (C)(6) OF THIS SECTION IS**
33 **GUILTY OF A FELONY AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT**
34 **EXCEEDING 5 YEARS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$25,000 OR BOTH.**

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, 2025.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.