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Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Support House Bill 823

**Public High Schools – Mathematics Credit – Computer Science and Computer
Programming**

House Ways and Means Committee

Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce HB 823 entitled “Public High Schools – Mathematics Credit Requirement – Computer Science and Computer Programming.”

This bill passed both this committee and the House last year but did not get a vote in time in the Senate.

This bill seeks to enable county boards of education to allow computer science or computer programming to satisfy the graduation requirement for one of the math credits. I would like to make clear that this bill would allow localities to adopt this procedure, but would not mandate changes in curriculum.

According to Code.org research there are currently over 400,000 open computing jobs nationwide. We have heard testimony several times over the past few years that there are anywhere between 15 – 20,000 open computing jobs in Maryland. These jobs are high paying jobs well over double the average annual salary of other positions.

This trend is growing in the United States. Last year I testified that the data showed 25 states allowed these classes to count towards the graduation requirement. According to Code.org 40 out of 50 states allow a computer science class to count towards a math graduation requirement. 48 states plus DC allow math or science to count towards a graduation requirement. It is important to take this step because it places value on these classes. Included with my testimony are links that will outline the computer science trends state by state both as a snapshot and with detailed descriptions. These trends align with much of what we have heard during our discussions of the Kirwan Commission. Passing this bill would be a great first step in implementation of those goals. Doing this now will provide an opportunity for our students to hopefully get access to these important skills right away as other measures are implemented.

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I think we can all agree that the past year of online learning has proven how important these skills are for our children. Implementation of these classes should be potentially less expensive for local boards to implement due to the number of laptops that have been provided due to the pandemic. These skills are essential both now and for our children's future success.

We live in a technology driven society and almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives require computer skills. Exposing our children to computer science and programming will provide them with options and exciting career paths that will provide them with the opportunity for success. 90% of parents would like to have these opportunities for their children.

I have worked as a technical recruiter for almost eleven years. It goes without question that the hardest positions to fill are in those in the computer science and programming arena. The average salary for these positions can range from the mid 60's at the entry level to \$125,000 or more at the senior level in the defense sector. Those numbers have been trending higher in the commercial sector.

If this bill is passed allowing local school boards to implement these classes, I believe we will expose all interested students to computer science and programming classes; and in turn will provide a more comprehensive education that will result greater opportunities and a more adequately a prepared workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter, and again I ask for a **favorable** report on **HB 823**.

Respectfully,

Delegate April Rose