

**Testimony of Catherine Carter**  
**Supporting HB0824: Cyber Safety Guide and Training Course**  
**Ways and Means Committee**  
**Friday, February 12, 2021**

My name is Catherine Carter. I live in District 9 and writing in support of HB0824: Cyber Safety Guide and Training Course. Our schools prepare students for the real world, but our curriculum needs to keep up with the changing times. We live in a technology driven society that requires skills sets to navigator safely as students, consumers, and employees.

### **Behavioral Health**

The internet has been a double edge sword. My kids can connect with friends, family, especially during COVID-19. However, it is full of destructive forces that can be used to bully and destroy self-esteem. Parents are many times left to pick up the pieces or banning social media altogether. Many of us lack the expertise to teach their kids how to safely navigate. Many parents of teenagers existed before the internet or had a MySpace account and are not aware of all that a child with an undeveloped frontal lobe and all the power of the internet can do.

### **Protecting Kids Future**

Protecting our kids identity theft is a significant need. I have had two college-aged family members who have had thousands of dollars stole from them within the last year. I tell their mom that unfortunately her kids seem to be the canary in the mine on what I need to teach my kids. Identity theft was not on my list of things to teach.

### **Better Trained Workforce**

I have worked in companies that manage cybersecurity and the most significant weakness in an agency or company is the insider threats. You can have all the firewalls, secure cloud, password protection, and triple encryption, but employees not following cybersecurity process can cause significant damage. Employees, through carelessness or accident, unwittingly compromise the security. They open their company or agency to malicious exploitation, theft or destructions of data or the company communications or information technology resources. We have seen this play out in recent Ransomware acts on Howard County Judicial system, Baltimore City, and Baltimore County School District.

However, we can instruct our students from third grade to twelfth on cybersecurity threats and best practices. This bill will not only create a future workforce prepared to enter the government jobs that will help Maryland thrive economically and but may inspire more students to enter the cybersecurity field as they learn the need and damage that these threats cause our nation and commercial infrastructure. There are more jobs than qualified applicates in cybersecurity and computer engineering, especially in Maryland. Also, students can learn the importance of a clean record and social media for background checks when applying for security clearances.

In closing, I ask for a favorable vote for HB0824 to help support parents who like me could use some cybersecurity expertise helping to instruct their kids how to safely navigate technology and social media.