



Meeting Minutes
Subcommittee on Economic Development
July 14, 2025
8 Market Street, Suite 200, Baltimore
& Zoom
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Member Attendance (3/10)

Bel Leong-hong (chair), Larry Letow, Kimberly Mentzell

Attendance by the Subcommittee on Education and Workforce Development (2/9)

Senator Katie Fry Hester and Dr. Michel Cukier

Invited Subject Matter Experts

Jake Hsu, chair of the Maryland 2030 Apprenticeship Commission, and Seeyew Mo, Senior Advisor, CyberMaryland Program, Maryland Department of Labor

Staff Attendance

Dr. Greg von Lehmen (University of Maryland Global Campus, assigned staff to the Maryland Cybersecurity Council)

Business Meeting

The chair welcomed the members able to participate and the presenters. For the benefit of the members who could attend, the chair asked that Mr. Hsu and Mr. Mo to go ahead with their remarks.

Mr. Hsu began by discussing the challenge of workforce development. Technological change is so rapid that post-secondary institutions are not able to pace with it, creating a gap between curricula and industry needs. Artificial intelligence has only accelerated or widened the gap. Other challenges are that workforce development programs and efforts to support innovation within the State are fragmented.

A different model is needed to provide training and education in the midst of this change, one that serves both innovation and workforce development. Mr. Hsu proposed that the solution is to collocate workforce education and industry under one roof, allowing workforce development to be designed and remixed in real time with industry needs. He emphasized the importance of thinking holistically, including housing and wrap-around services (e.g., child care) to support those pursuing training.

He observed that the logical sectors to start with in Maryland are cybersecurity and AI. He suggested that the strategy for realizing this concept would have three components. One, financing would be a public/private partnership. This would take the form of private capital leveraging the tax incentives of opportunity zones in the State. Two, training would be an AI-

augmented strategy since industry is quickly moving to incorporate AI within workstreams. Third, would be designing non-traditional or non-postsecondary pathways to industry jobs along with the necessary support for wrap-around services and work/life integration.

Mr. Mo added to Mr. Hsu comments that the shape of workforce needs is changing. It used to be pyramidal, where entry level employees gained experience and worked their way up the career ladder. With AI, the shape is becoming more diamond shaped, with fewer jobs at the bottom and a greater need for mid-level employees. He underscored that workforce training and development must take this into account. Part of the challenge is ensuring that training and education program are designed to provide the requisite experience for those mid-level jobs.

The chair opened the floor to questions from the members.

Mr. Letow asked if the broad concept of collocating training programs and industry partners working together on their common training needs in real time had been tested anywhere. He could think of analogous situations where one firm might go to another trusted firm for help with a client problem that they could not solve. But he was not aware of a tested model of putting companies and training efforts under one roof in a cooperative effort to design training opportunities to meet their workforce needs.

Mr. Mo stated that there are components of the model that have been tested, like non-traditional pathways to jobs. But he observed that the key point is that everyone agrees on the problem—AI is changing job needs rapidly for all industries—and that some solution to provide training close to the change to meet industry needs must be found.

Ms. Mentzell stated that trust among industry partners would be central to the model. Speaking as a former high school computer science teacher, she added that the workforce development solution must start at the K12 level and that teacher education in AI and cyber must be part of the concept.

Senator Hester expressed her interest in the concept as outlined by Mr. Hsu and wanted to follow up for another discussion. For the purpose of the meeting, she mentioned the Data Science and AI Institute at Johns Hopkins University and the companies that the Institute might attract.

With no further questions or discussion from the members, the chair thanked Mr. Hsu and Mr. Mo for the vision and the information that they shared. She stated that she would like to convene a meeting of her larger subcommittee for discussion of these topics.

With no further business, the chair adjourned the meeting.