



STATE OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**Wes Moore**

May 20, 2025

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate of Maryland  
H-107 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
H-101 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones,

After close review of House Bill 738 and Senate Bill 705 - *Department of Information Technology - Major Information Technology Development Projects – Oversight*, and in accordance with Article II, Section 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, I will allow this legislation to be enacted without my signature.

We are in agreement that the traditional oversight model for Major Information Technology Development Projects (MITDPs) does not work – and has historically performed poorly, often materializing in late and costly projects with out-of-date technology “solutions” that fail to meet user needs. This decades-long, abysmal management of MITDPs is unacceptable and cannot continue. Our common ground is a genuine desire for meaningful oversight, as well as greater flexibility, transparency, and accountability to promote impactful technology solutions for our State. For far too long, however, the real issues hindering technology delivery have been overlooked, ignored, or simply kicked down the road. Although this well-intended legislation attempts to address legitimate concerns regarding the funding, management, and oversight of MITDPs, many of its provisions recycle ineffective policies from the past, mirror reforms already underway, or are overly prescriptive.

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In our commitment to bring real and lasting change to the MITDP process, the Moore-Miller Administration has taken proactive steps to address these systemic issues, modernize the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), and rebuild state government. In January 2024, I established the Maryland Digital Service (MDDS) within DoIT to support state agencies with its first in-house strategic team of product managers, user researchers, designers, and engineers whose mission is to provide agencies with enhanced project support and oversight while improving user experience and accessibility. From its inception, MDDS' subject matter experts hit the ground running and have been actively engaged with several agencies, including the Departments of Veterans and Military Families; General Services; Health; Human Services; Agriculture; and Labor; as well as the Office of the Secretary of State and the State Board of Elections. Prior to the 2025 legislative session, my administration prefiled House Bill 221 and Senate Bill 242 - *Department of Information Technology - Maryland Digital Service - Establishment*, which would have codified the Maryland Digital Service, as well as the processes it has been implementing alongside sister agencies. Unfortunately, that legislation was merged into House Bill 738 and Senate Bill 705, which included several provisions that do not align with the long-term vision and goals of my administration.

Under the strong and effective leadership of Secretary Katie Savage, DoIT has been tackling the very issues that this legislation is trying to solve – not through more onerous oversight, but through a fundamental change in how the State manages and develops technology. This shift from an outdated project-based approach to one that is more agile and product-based will result in greater savings, less risk, and smaller, more transparent procurements that, in the end, will be more effective. While states across the nation have experienced similar challenges, Secretary Savage brings the unique perspective and expertise of having run the United States Digital Service agency team at the Department of Defense, which was established in 2014 to address the lack of in-house talent and poorly managed procurements as a means of modernizing outdated IT systems and websites. After inheriting several worrisome audit findings from previous administrations – and well before this legislation was passed – Secretary Savage and the entire DoIT team took great initiative and have been making meaningful, sustainable progress toward resolving MITDP issues across state agencies. Although I recognize the importance of legislative oversight as an integral part of checks and balances, my preference here is to provide more time and greater leeway for my administration to continue making the necessary course corrections from its current path. This paradigm shift away from the traditional manner in which the State has handled technology is the work of years, not months.

In addition to being redundant, House Bill 738 and Senate Bill 705 are too prescriptive at times – most especially when referring to the Statewide Agile Resources and Teams contract, as well as the use of one productivity suite. Although the intent of enhanced reporting is a good one – to promote greater transparency, understanding, and accountability – I question the inclusion of a

specific contract name, as the Agile contract and MITDPs are only tangentially related; some MITDPs will use this contract vehicle, some will use it multiple times, and others may not use it at all. Required reporting that is based on the use of the Statewide Agile Resources and Teams contract will not produce better results from MITDPs, but certainly will increase the burden on the Board of Public Works, as well as the Legislative Policy Committee.

Similarly, the use of one statewide productivity suite could lead to positive results, such as streamlined and more efficient workflows – but also could generate unintended consequences, such as limiting options, inhibiting creativity, or impeding flexibility when searching for the right IT solution. Given the rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence and cybersecurity, our State must be capable – now more than ever – of responding quickly, efficiently, and in the most appropriate manner to each unique situation that arises, all while technology is constantly evolving. Although the legislation does allow for some exceptions, I fear this slippery slope could narrow possibilities even further in the years ahead, as opposed to allowing real time decisions to be made by subject matter experts.

Although I appreciate the many hours of conversation and hard work that went into crafting this legislation, my administration would have preferred *starting* with a workgroup. MITDPs touch agencies throughout state government – and with a workgroup as the starting point, all voices could have been heard within a more reasonable timeframe – providing more opportunities to examine the issue from every angle in lieu of rushing legislation through the final days of session. Finding lasting solutions to the complex issues we face requires a collaborative approach driven by deep product expertise, which was not possible given the time constraints, and I hope to see subject matter experts from DoIT, as well as other relevant agencies, included as participants in your interim workgroup.

The Moore-Miller Administration remains committed to achieving meaningful MITDP oversight reform, and the Department of Information Technology, as well as the Maryland Digital Service, will continue to work in coordination with its sister agencies to create sustainable change that works for all agencies. For these reasons, House Bill 738 and Senate Bill 705 will take effect without my signature. We look forward to continuing the conversation on this important issue, as well as working in partnership with the General Assembly.

Sincerely,



Wes Moore  
Governor