

# Chapter 503

(House Bill 396)

AN ACT concerning

## ~~Commission on~~ *Department of Disabilities – Study of Accessibility Concepts in Computer Science, Information Systems, and Information Technology Programs in Higher Education*

FOR the purpose of ~~establishing the Commission on Accessibility Concepts in Computer Science, Information Systems, and Information Technology Programs in Higher Education; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Commission; prohibiting a member of the Commission from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Commission~~ *requiring the Department of Disabilities, in cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind, to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters accessibility concepts in computer science, information systems, and information technology programs in higher education; requiring the Commission Department to submit a preliminary report and a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and certain committees of the General Assembly on or before certain dates; providing for the termination of this Act; defining a certain term; and generally relating to the Commission on Accessibility Concepts in Computer Science, Information Systems, and Information Technology Programs in Higher Education* *study of accessibility concepts in computer science, information systems, and information technology programs in higher education.*

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

~~(a) There is a Commission on Accessibility Concepts in Computer Science, Information Systems, and Information Technology Programs in Higher Education.~~

~~(b) The Commission consists of the following members:~~

~~(1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;~~

~~(2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;~~

~~(3) the Secretary of Information Technology, or the Secretary's designee;~~

- ~~(4) the Secretary of Higher Education, or the Secretary's designee;~~
- ~~(5) the Executive Director of the Maryland Technology Assistance Program, or the Executive Director's designee; and~~
- ~~(6) the following members, appointed by the Governor:~~
  - ~~(i) one member who is blind or visually impaired, appointed in consultation with the National Federation of the Blind;~~
  - ~~(ii) one professor of computer science at an institution of higher education in the State, appointed in consultation with the University System of Maryland;~~
  - ~~(iii) one professor of information systems at an institution of higher education in the State, appointed in consultation with the University System of Maryland;~~
  - ~~(iv) one professor of information technology at an institution of higher education in the State, appointed in consultation with the University System of Maryland;~~
  - ~~(v) one representative of a community college in the State, appointed in consultation with the Maryland Association of Community Colleges;~~
  - ~~(vi) one representative of Morgan State University;~~
  - ~~(vii) one representative of St. Mary's College of Maryland;~~
  - ~~(viii) one representative of the Maryland Independent College and University Association;~~
  - ~~(ix) two university provosts from the University System of Maryland Academic Affairs Advisory Council;~~
  - ~~(x) one representative of the Maryland Disabilities Law Center;~~
  - ~~(xi) one student enrolled in a program of study that focuses on computer science, information systems, or information technology; and~~
  - ~~(xii) one representative of a company that provides Web site design services to private businesses in the State.~~
- ~~(e) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Commission.~~

~~(d) The Department of Information Technology, in coordination with the Maryland Technology Assistance Program, shall provide staff for the Commission.~~

~~(e) A member of the Commission:~~

~~(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but~~

~~(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.~~

(a) The Department of Disabilities, in cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind, shall study accessibility concepts in computer science, information systems, and information technology programs in higher education.

(b) As part of the study, the Department shall convene a workgroup that consists of:

(1) provosts, Chief Information Officers, and faculty members in computer science, information systems, and information technology programs in higher education from:

(i) the University System of Maryland;

(ii) Morgan State University;

(iii) St. Mary's College of Maryland;

(iv) private nonprofit institutions of higher education in the State; and

(v) community colleges; and

(2) members who are:

(i) accessibility experts;

(ii) web developers; and

(iii) any other individuals with knowledge that would benefit the Department in its study.

~~(c) (1) In this subsection, "Web accessibility" means the practice of making Web sites useable by individuals of all abilities and disabilities. accessibility" means fully and equally accessible to and independently usable by individuals with disabilities so that they are able to acquire the same information, engage in the same~~

interactions, and enjoy the same services as users without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

(2) The ~~Commission~~ Department shall:

(i) compile existing information on and identify any gaps in the current course offerings for ~~Web~~ accessibility to information technologies in institutions of higher education in the State;

(ii) if gaps in the course offerings for ~~Web~~ accessibility to information technologies are found:

1. determine what is needed to close the gaps; and
2. determine the State and local cost of each proposal to close the gaps; and

(iii) make recommendations on:

1. the appropriate number of course offerings for ~~Web~~ accessibility to information technologies, including proposals for additional course offerings, if necessary;
2. funding requirements and budgetary priorities to address the issues raised by the proposals considered by the ~~Commission~~ Department;
3. legislation and policy initiatives to address the issues raised by the proposals considered by the ~~Commission~~ Department; and
4. any other relevant issues considered by the ~~Commission~~ Department.

~~(e)~~ (d) (1) On or before December 15, 2015, the ~~Commission~~ Department shall submit a preliminary report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means.

(2) On or before June 30, 2017, the ~~Commission~~ Department shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 3 years and, at the end of June 30,

2017, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

**Approved by the Governor, May 15, 2014.**