

**Calendar No. 751**

118TH CONGRESS }  
2d Session

SENATE

{ REPORT  
118-331

DHS CYBERSECURITY INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAM ACT

---

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 5321

TO AMEND THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002 TO  
ESTABLISH DHS CYBERSECURITY INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



DECEMBER 19 (legislative day, DECEMBER 16), 2024.—Ordered to be  
printed

---

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

59-010

WASHINGTON : 2025

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

GARY C. PETERS, Michigan, *Chairman*

THOMAS R. CARPER, Delaware	RAND PAUL, Kentucky
MAGGIE HASSAN, New Hampshire	RON JOHNSON, Wisconsin
KYRSTEN SINEMA, Arizona	JAMES LANKFORD, Oklahoma
JACKY ROSEN, Nevada	MITT ROMNEY, Utah
JON OSSOFF, Georgia	RICK SCOTT, Florida
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, Connecticut	JOSH HAWLEY, Missouri
ADAM SCHIFF, California	ROGER MARSHALL, Kansas

DAVID M. WEINBERG, *Staff Director*

ALAN S. KAHN, *Chief Counsel*

CHRISTOPHER J. MULKINS, *Director of Homeland Security*

EMILY A. FERGUSON, *Professional Staff Member*

WILLIAM E. HENDERSON III, *Minority Staff Director*

CHRISTINA N. SALAZAR, *Minority Chief Counsel*

ANDREW J. HOPKINS, *Minority Counsel*

KENDAL B. TIGNER, *Minority Professional Staff Member*

LAURA W. KILBRIDE, *Chief Clerk*

Calendar No. 751

118TH CONGRESS } 2d Session }	SENATE	{ REPORT 118-331
----------------------------------	--------	------------------------

DHS CYBERSECURITY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ACT

DECEMBER 19 (legislative day, DECEMBER 16), 2024.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 5321]

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 5321) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a DHS Cybersecurity Internship Program, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment, in the nature of a substitute, and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

CONTENTS

	Page
I. Purpose and Summary .....	1
II. Background and Need for the Legislation .....	2
III. Legislative History .....	3
IV. Section-by-Section Analysis of the Bill, as Reported .....	3
V. Evaluation of Regulatory Impact .....	4
VI. Changes in Existing Law Made by the Bill, as Reported .....	4

I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

S. 5321, the *DHS Cybersecurity Internship Act*, codifies the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) cyber internship program. This bill authorizes DHS to provide paid cybersecurity internships to students at secondary schools, technical schools, community colleges, undergraduate programs, and postgraduate programs. It directs DHS to, as practicable, ensure each internship class includes members from across the eligible institution types. Additionally, the bill requires DHS to provide an annual report to Congress on the number of participating individuals, their job duties, and DHS components supported, as well as outreach and recruiting efforts by DHS for the program.

## II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Cybersecurity threats against both the government and private sector are a matter of national security.<sup>1</sup> In Fiscal Year 2023 alone, the total number of cyber incidents faced by federal agencies increased from 29,319 to 32,229.<sup>2</sup> Globally, cyber threats increased by 30% from 2023 to 2024, with education, government, military, and healthcare industries as the most prominent targets.<sup>3</sup> To properly combat cyber threats and defend the nation's cyber networks and systems, the United States needs a capable and sustainable cybersecurity workforce.<sup>4</sup> However, according to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics' 2024 Cybersecurity Workforce Supply and Demand Report, in the past five years, the gap between the supply and demand of cybersecurity workers has continued to be a major challenge for the United States.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the International Information System Security Certification Consortium (ISC2) also estimated that in 2024 there were 542,687 unfilled cyber positions in the public and private sectors in the United States, an increase of 4.0% from 2023.<sup>6</sup> The hiring challenges faced in the public sector are even more stark because pay differences may be 20 to 50% greater in the private sector for similar job roles.<sup>7</sup> Despite this challenge, it is essential to fill these roles within government as cybersecurity personnel protect the nation from cyberattacks and ensure confidentiality, integrity, and access to information for citizens and employees.

Recognizing the increased need for a talented cyber workforce, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) launched its cyber security college internship program as part of the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies (NICCS) in 2013.<sup>8</sup> The program is designed to allow current high school and college students to work alongside cyber experts at DHS to support agency mission goals.<sup>9</sup> DHS established this program under the authorities of 5 U.S.C. § 3111a, which allows agency heads to create internship programs and to pay those interns.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> White House, *National Cybersecurity Strategy* (March 2, 2023) ([www.whitehouse.gov/oncd/national-cybersecurity-strategy/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/oncd/national-cybersecurity-strategy/)) and Exec. Order No. 14028 86 FR 26633 (May 12, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Office of Management and Budget, *Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023* (June 2024) ([www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/FY23-FISMA-Report.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/FY23-FISMA-Report.pdf)).

<sup>3</sup> Check Point, *Check Point Research Reports Highest Increase of Global Cyber Attacks seen in last two years—a 30% Increase in Q2 2024 Global Cyber Attacks* (July 16, 2024) (<https://blog.checkpoint.com/research/check-point-research-reports-highest-increase-of-global-cyber-attacks-seen-in-last-two-years-a-30-increase-in-q2-2024-global-cyber-attacks>).

<sup>4</sup> Department of Defense, *DOD Cyber Workforce Strategy: 2023–2027* (March 1, 2023) (<https://dodcio.defense.gov/Portals/0/Documents/Library/CWF-Strategy.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, *Cybersecurity Workforce Supply and Demand Report* (May 2024) (<https://nces.nsf.gov/760/assets/0/files/ncses-cwdi-supply-demand-report.pdf>).

<sup>6</sup> ISC2, *Global Cybersecurity Workforce Prepares for an AI-Driven World*, at 11 (2024) (<https://edge.sitecorecloud.io/international173-xmc4e73-prod0f-9660/media/Project/ISC2/Main/Media/documents/research/2024-ISC2-WFS.pdf>).

<sup>7</sup> StateTech, *How Thoughtful Cybersecurity Training Yields Benefits for Government Workers* (February 2, 2022) ([statetechmagazine.com/article/2022/02/how-thoughtful-cybersecurity-training-yields-benefits-government-workers](https://statetechmagazine.com/article/2022/02/how-thoughtful-cybersecurity-training-yields-benefits-government-workers)); RAND, *Comparison of Public and Private Sector Cybersecurity and IT Workforces* (February 7, 2023) ([www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA660-7.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA660-7.html)).

<sup>8</sup> Department of Homeland Security, *DHS Launches National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies* (February 21, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Department of Homeland Security, *Cybersecurity Internship Program* (accessed December 4, 2024) (<https://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-careers/cybersecurity-internship-program>).

<sup>10</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 3111(a).

In June 2024, DHS’s Chief Information Officer and Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer, Eric Hysen, testified before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security that despite DHS employing over 8,000 cybersecurity professionals there are an estimated 2,000 cyber job openings just within DHS.<sup>11</sup> The DHS Cybersecurity Internship Act would address the need to bolster the United States’ cyber workforce by codifying DHS’s cyber internship program, solidifying an established pipeline for cyber talent to enter federal service. The bill also includes several reporting requirements to increase oversight and ensure the program’s effectiveness, which DHS can then use to modify and improve the program. Additionally, requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to consider participants from various institutions, including technical schools and community colleges, will allow for a cohort with a wider range of background experiences within the internship program.

### III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Senator Peters (D-MI) introduced S. 5321, the *DHS Cybersecurity Internship Program Act*, on November 14, 2024. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The Committee considered S. 5321 at a business meeting on November 20, 2024. At the business meeting, Chairman Peters offered a substitute amendment to the bill, which gave a technical correction clarifying that eligible individuals may participate but are not required to participate in the program. The Committee adopted the Peters substitute amendment with unanimous consent with Senators Peters, Hassan, Rosen, Ossoff, Blumenthal, Butler, Lankford, and Hawley present.

The bill, amended by the Peters substitute amendment was ordered reported favorably by a roll call vote of 7 yeas to 1 nay with Senators Peters, Hassan, Rosen, Ossoff, Blumenthal, Butler, and Lankford voting in the affirmative, and Senator Hawley voting in the negative. Senators Carper, Sinema, Romney and Marshall voted yea by proxy, and Senators Paul, Johnson and Scott voted nay by proxy for the record only.

### IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE BILL, AS REPORTED

#### *Section 1: Short title*

This section establishes the short title of the bill as the “DHS Cybersecurity Internship Program Act.”

#### *Section 2: Cybersecurity internship program*

Subsection (a) includes the following subparagraphs by amending subtitle D of title XIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to add Sec. 1334.

Subsection (a) of Sec. 1334 defines “historically black college or university,” “institution of higher education,” “junior or community college,” “minority-serving institution,” “secondary school,” and “technical, trade, or vocational school.”

<sup>11</sup> United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Testimony Submitted for the Record of Eric Hysen, Dept. of Homeland Security, *Finding 500,000: Addressing America’s Cyber Workforce Gap*, 118th Cong. (Jun. 26, 2024).

Subsection (b) of Sec. 1334 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to have a paid cybersecurity internship program for eligible participants at the Department of Homeland Security. The Secretary will align duties with the participant's education, skills, and experience.

Subsection (c) of Sec. 1334 defines the eligibility of a participant in the cybersecurity internship program as a citizen of the United States, be at least 16 years old, and be enrolled in a secondary school, technical, trade, or vocational school, or institution of higher education.

Subsection (d) of Sec. 1334 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure participants for each intern class in the cybersecurity internship program include students enrolled in secondary education, junior or community colleges, undergraduate degree programs, postgraduate degree programs, and technical, trade or vocational schools.

Subsection (e) of Sec. 1334 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit an annual report beginning 1 year after the date of enactment to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives containing a description of outreach efforts to raise awareness of the cybersecurity internship program, information on specific recruiting efforts by the Secretary to increase participation in the Program, and the number of individuals participating in the Program, listed by the type of school or program in which the individual is enrolled at the time of participation, and information on the nature of each such participation, including Department components supported, and the duties of each such individual.

Subsection (b) makes a clerical amendment to add "Sec. 1334. Cybersecurity internship program," to the table of contents accompanying the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

## V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill and determined that the bill will have no regulatory impact within the meaning of the rules. The Committee agrees with the Congressional Budget Office's statement that the bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

## VI. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in brackets, new matter is printed in *italic*, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

## HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—this Act may be cited as the “Homeland Security Act of 2002”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

\* \* \* \* \*

## TITLE XIII—FEDERAL WORKFORCE IMPROVEMENT

### Subtitle D—Academic Training

\* \* \* \* \*

*Sec. 1334. Cybersecurity internship program.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## TITLE XIII—FEDERAL WORKFORCE IMPROVEMENT

\* \* \* \* \*

### Subtitle D—Academic Training

\* \* \* \* \*

### SEC. 1334. CYBERSECURITY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term ‘historically Black college or university’ has the meaning given the term ‘part B institution’ in section 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061).

(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given that term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(3) JUNIOR OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—The term ‘junior or community college’ has the meaning given that term in section 312 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058).

(4) MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term ‘minority-serving institution’ means an eligible institution of higher education described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

(5) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term ‘secondary school’ means a school or program that provides secondary education, as determined under State law, except that the term does not include any education beyond grade 12.

(6) TECHNICAL, TRADE, OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL.—The term ‘technical, trade, or vocational school’ has the meaning given

*that term in section 411.167 of title 20, Code of Federal Regulations.*

(b) *PROGRAM.*—The Secretary shall carry out a cybersecurity internship program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’) under which an eligible individual participates in a paid cybersecurity internship at the Department with duties aligned to such participant’s respective education, skills, and experience.

(c) *ELIGIBILITY.*—To be eligible to participate in the Program, an individual shall—

(1) be a citizen of the United States;

(2) be at least 16 years old; and

(3) be enrolled in a secondary school, technical, trade, or vocational school, or institution of higher education, in accordance with subsection (d).

(d) *COMPOSITION.*—The Secretary shall, as practicable, ensure that participants selected for the Program for each intern class include students enrolled in each of the following:

(1) Secondary schools.

(2) Junior or community colleges.

(3) Undergraduate degree programs.

(4) Postgraduate degree programs.

(5) Technical, trade, or vocational schools.

(e) *REPORTS.*—

(1) *REPORTS.*—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the DHS Cybersecurity Internship Program Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report on the Program.

(2) *MATTERS.*—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to the most recent Program year, the following:

(A) A description of outreach efforts by the Secretary to raise awareness of the Program among secondary schools and institutions of higher education, including among junior or community colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, and other minority-serving institutions.

(B) Information on specific recruiting efforts by the Secretary to increase participation in the Program.

(C) The number of individuals participating in the Program, listed by the type of school or program in which the individual is enrolled at the time of participation, and information on the nature of each such participation, including Department components supported, and the duties of each such individual.

(3) *CONSOLIDATION.*—Reports submitted under this subsection may be consolidated with the reports required under section 1333(e).

\* \* \* \* \*