

# Ohio Congresswoman Shontel Brown introduces Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce Act to increase Black

Written by Kathy  
Wednesday, 22 May 2024 17:10

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## Ohio Congresswoman Shontel Brown (11-OH)

Staff article: [Clevelandurbannews.com](https://www.clevelandurbannews.com) and [Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com](https://www.kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com)

Washington, D.C. – Ohio Congresswoman Shontel Brown (OH-11) and Michigan Congresswoman Haley Stevens (MI-11) have introduced the Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce Act (H.R.8469) in an effort to establish a program at the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to promote the cybersecurity field to underrepresented and disadvantaged communities.

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The proposed legislation requires CISA, a federal government agency, to expand existing education and outreach activities and promote cybersecurity careers to a diverse audience. It was introduced with 32 other cosponsors.

Workforce diversity is essential to a strong, secure, shining nation that can protect us from a range of threats now and into the future," said Rep. Brown, a Black Warrensville Hts. Democrat whose 11th congressional district includes the largely Black city of Cleveland. "I am proud to introduce this legislation with Congresswoman Stevens and look forward to building further support in Congress."

Computer security, cybersecurity, digital security or information technology security (IT security) is the protection of [computer systems](#) and [networks](#) from attacks by malicious actors that may result in unauthorized information disclosure, theft of, or damage to [hardware](#), [software](#), or [data](#), as well as from the [disruption](#) or misdirection of the services they provide.

The field is significant due to the expanded reliance on [computer systems](#), the [Internet](#), and [wireless network](#) standards such as [Bluetooth](#) and [Wi-Fi](#). It is also significant due to the growth of [smart devices](#), including [smartphones](#), [televisions](#), and the various devices that constitute the

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[Internet of things](#)  
(IoT).

[According to one estimate](#) , there are currently over 400,000 unfilled cybersecurity positions in the United States, with these jobs taking 21% longer to fill than other tech positions. The problem has been recognized by the Biden-Harris Administration, which last year announced a [National Cyber Workforce and Education Strategy](#)

[The Aspen Institute estimates](#) that only 9% of cybersecurity workers are Black, only 4% are Hispanic, only 1% are Native American, and only 24% are women.

"In order to ensure the security of our cyber infrastructure we need to have the best workforce possible and that means employing Americans of all backgrounds," said Rep. Haley Stevens. "That's why I am proud to co-lead the Cybersecurity Workforce Act with Rep. Shontel Brown, which would empower CISA to increase recruitment of cybersecurity professionals from underrepresented communities. Connecting Americans with good jobs that also protect our security interests is a win for everyone."

Counted among the bill's original cosponsors are House Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie Thompson (MS-02), Congressional Black Caucus Chair Congressman Steven Horsford (NV-02), and former Assistant Leader Congressman James Clyburn (SC-06).

CISA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is the operational lead for federal cybersecurity and the national coordinator for critical infrastructure and resilience.

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## The Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce Act

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Establishes new diversity program at CISA: 180 days after enactment the Director of CISA shall establish a program to promote the cybersecurity field to diverse communities.

Program shall be established within CISA's Cybersecurity Education and Training Assistance Program.

- CISA shall conduct outreach to promote awareness of cybersecurity employment to educators, unions, chambers of commerce, workforce development officers, schools, and other institutions.

- Cybersecurity is necessary for the public and private sector and is also a well-paying field. According to the Department of Labor, [The median annual wage for Information Security Analysts is \\$120,360](#)

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Program Scope: The new program created by the Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce Act is tasked with promoting the cybersecurity field to d isadvantaged communities, older individuals, racial and ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities, g eographically diverse communities, s ocioeconomically diverse communities, i ndividuals from nontraditional educational paths, v eterans and i ndividuals who were formerly incarcerated

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- Authorization of Appropriations and Reporting

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- The Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce Act authorizes \$20 million annually to the Department of Homeland Security through 2030 to carry out the program. The legislation requires CISA to report to Congress annually on the efficacy of the program

- [Clevelandurbannews.com](https://www.clevelandurbannews.com) and [Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com](https://www.kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com) , the most read Black digital newspaper and Black blog in Ohio and in the Midwest. Tel: (216) 659-0473. Email: [editor@clevelandurbannews.com](mailto:editor@clevelandurbannews.com). We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview

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