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State of Maryland Welcomes New State Chief Cybersecurity Officer

Crownsville, MD: The Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is excited to announce James Saunders as the State of Maryland's Acting Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), effective May 5, 2025.

"At a time when Maryland is choosing to bet big on the cybersecurity industry, it is a very big deal that we have James Saunders as our new Chi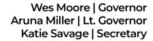ef Cybersecurity Officer. James brings vast experience to this role, and we are grateful that he has raised his hand to serve," **said Gov. Moore.** " With James on board, we will continue to ensure our people are protected, our state is secure, and Maryland sets the standard for leadership in cyber."

As State CISO, Saunders will lead the DoIT's Office of Security Management, which is responsible for securing the State of Maryland's IT systems, infrastructure, and private data. He brings over 15 years of cybersecurity leadership experience across the federal government and private sector.

"As public and private organizations face new threats like agentic AI, strong cybersecurity is more important than ever," **said DoIT Secretary Katie Savage**. "James Saunders is an experienced cybersecurity expert who has helped secure some of our nation's most important systems. We are thrilled he is bringing his expertise and leadership to the State of Maryland."

Saunders was a highly sought-after candidate for both the Department of Information Technology and the Executive Office of Governor Wes Moore. He will

serve as Acting State CISO before being confirmed as State CISO by the Maryland State Senate and officially appointed by the Governor.

Before joining DoIT, Saunders served as the CISO and Deputy Chief Information Officer for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. There, he led the implementation of zero-trust programs and drove a cultural transformation within the agency's security team to enhance inter-agency collaboration. He also served as the CISO for the U.S. Small Business Administration, where he supported the development of secure systems that distributed nearly $700 billion in funds to small businesses nationwide and led the agency's rapid shift to secure remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I am a big advocate for embracing emerging technologies to help transform and secure organizations," **said new State CISO James Saunders**. "And I'm a big believer in partnership. Whether they are part of my security team or not, I will work hand in hand with those across the State of Maryland to ensure we keep our people and our assets safe, together."