



MARYLAND Business Roundtable for EDUCATION

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February 11, 2020

Delegate Anne Kaiser
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser:

This letter is submitted in strong support of HB 548, Career and Technology Education - Training in Soft Business Skills. HB 548 seeks to integrate critical "soft" career skills such as business etiquette, social awareness and oral and written business communications into Maryland's existing CTE programs. The Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) believes students will benefit by becoming far more employable for both apprenticeships and full-time positions, while dramatically increasing their long-term potential for success. Businesses will benefit by having a "ready to work" student population which will increase productivity, reduce their training burden and increase their propensity to hire. Finally, Maryland will benefit by having a workforce armed with the skills to attract businesses to increase their presence in Maryland.

MBRT has partnered on a number of initiatives that focus on the continued improvement of career-readiness among students, and it looks forward to future collaborations that will contribute to Maryland's growing economy and its need for a diverse and skilled workforce. MBRT has a 29-year history of advocating for a system of education that prepares all students for the rigor of college and the workplace. Jobs requiring high-level knowledge in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines represent a growing portion of the labor market. MBRT addresses this need and supports local school districts by deploying its volunteer network of hundreds of trained workforce professionals to middle and high schools throughout the state. MBRT volunteers motivate and inspire students to complete rigorous math and science courses and to prepare for college and careers; its workplace specialists offer job-specific expertise in concepts and practices, and co-teach lessons aligned to college- and career-ready standards.

MBRT has a sound track record of building these partnerships with employers, state and federal agencies, postsecondary representatives and local school systems to enhance career readiness. Its board and member organizations look forward to the development of this essential workforce initiative.

Brian Dulay
Executive Director