

February 19, 2020

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser  
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Room 131  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Support of House Bill 603 (County Boards of Education - Establishing Regional Career and Technical Education Schools - Authority)**

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser:

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA), representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, supports House Bill 603 (County Boards of Education - Establishing Regional Career and Technical Education Schools - Authority).

This measure authorizes county boards of education in specific counties to establish regional Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools.

Such programs could help workforce shortage occupations like construction and development, which are currently facing a labor shortage due to a lack of skilled workers in our industry. Many skilled workers left the industry during the recession, and never returned. Compounding this problem, a whole generation of younger workers is no longer considering residential/commercial construction as a viable career path. Many high schools have phased out shop classes, so students are attending four-year institutions instead. As older workers are retiring, no one is available to take their spots and our industry is weakened. Home building slows without a strong labor force, keeping families from building strong communities and stunting economic progress in the State.

Authorizing CTE schools provides more Maryland students the opportunity to gain technical skills they could use to enter the job market, earn a sustainable income, and contribute to the economic development of the State.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or [lgraf@marylandbuilders.org](mailto:lgraf@marylandbuilders.org).

cc: House Ways and Means Committee Members