

February 27, 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 1457 (Apprenticeship Start-Up Act of 2020)**

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 1457 (Property Tax - Appeals of Assessments - Commercial Real Property).

This measure allows apprenticeship employers to apply for a tax credit for apprenticeship programs, and establishes a fund to support such credits. This could make a positive difference to workforce shortage occupations like construction and development, which are currently facing labor shortages. Many workers left the industry during the recession, and never returned. As older workers are retiring, no one is available to take their spots. Compounding this problem, a whole generation of younger soon-to-be workers is no longer considering residential/commercial construction as a viable career path. Many high schools have phased out shop classes, or don't encourage students to explore them, so students who might benefit from a career in the trades no longer have the opportunity to learn about them.

Home building slows without a strong labor force, keeping families from building strong communities and stunting economic progress in the State. Granting tax credits for apprenticeship programs encourages these programs which provides an opportunity for Marylanders to learn technical trades, 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