



**Testimony of Ricarra Jones, Political Director of 1199SEIU on
SB 926 Labor and Employment – Apprenticeships and Representation
on the Apprenticeship and Training Council Act**

Position: FAVORABLE

March 29, 2022

Dear Chairman C. T. Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East is the largest healthcare union in the country with, with over 450,000 members throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida and Washington, D.C. **We fully support SB 926.**

SB 926 The Apprenticeships and Representation on the Apprenticeship and Training Council Act would positively impact many Marylanders by creating the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission tasked with expanding apprenticeship opportunities in the State, and also by requiring diversity among members of the Apprenticeship and Training Council.

SB 926 The Apprenticeships and Representation on the Apprenticeship and Training Council Act would create the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission, which will be tasked with examining and making recommendations to reduce skill shortages in high-demand occupations and provide affordable training for career pathways for young workers, including the health care industry.

Additionally, SB 926 would require an increase in the number of registered apprenticeships from 11,000 in 2021 to at least 80,000 in 2030.

Further, SB 926 would require reaching the Blueprint goal for 45% of high school graduates to complete the High School Level of a registered apprenticeship.

SB 926 also would require that the Apprenticeship and Training Council of the Division of Workforce Development include individuals who are Black and Latino to ensure a diverse membership.

SB 926 would provide expanded access to affordable, high quality apprenticeship programs in targeted, in-demand health care fields, leading to an influx of young workers with relevant skills into Maryland's communities.

We need more health care workers in Maryland. But, and especially in today's economy, the prospect of taking out educational loans is a substantial barrier for many people who would like to begin or further their careers in these rewarding fields. Apprenticeships provide immediate training and job experience in targeted fields and allow students to start their careers faster and with relevant skills. Affordability and expanded access to skilled and high-demand apprenticeship programs will lead to more students entering the health care industry, to the great benefit of Maryland.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB 926** and ask for a **FAVORABLE** report.

Sincerely,

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Maryland/DC Political Director

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