ANDREA FLETCHER HARRISON
Legislative District 24
Prince George's County

————

Economic Matters Committee

The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 204
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3919 · 410-841-3919
800-492-7122 *Ext.* 3919
AndreaFletcher.Harrison@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Written testimony for HB 1000 – Maryland Earn and Learn Act of 2022

as presented to

Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

April 5, 2022

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee, I am here today asking for a favorable report on HB 1000 – Maryland Earn and Learn Act of 2022. This bill allows a licensing authority to issue a license to an applicant if an applicant completes a federally-approved apprenticeship and passes state-levels exams. The apprenticeship must meet minimum federal standards and have been approved by one of the following: US Department of Labor apprenticeship agency, Maryland apprenticeship agency or other federally-recognized state apprenticeship agency.

Like many of you, I've always placed a great deal of value in work. It pays the bills and keeps the lights on. But work means so much more than

that. There is a sense of accomplishment in a day's work, or seeing the fruits of your labor.

When people work to their potential, they're not only more self-sufficient, they're also happier. That's what this bill aims to do: make it easier for people to get on their desired career track in order to earn a living and pay their bills. It does this by making fair, commonsense reforms to the apprenticeship-to-license process in Maryland.

Maryland is among a group of states that administers its system of apprenticeships. Some trades already use apprenticeships as a steppingstone to becoming fully licensed professionals, and I have consulted with trades on this legislation. They've carved a path for licensure-by-apprenticeship in Maryland, and I want to make sure that more people are afforded the same opportunity in this state—so that people can get the jobs they want, businesses can help fill open jobs, and we can keep growing our economy.

The Earn to Learn act of 2022 is simple: a person can get licensed in Maryland, so long as they complete a federally-approved apprenticeship in a job and pass state licensing exams. If someone earns a license via an apprenticeship path, they will be held to the same standard as their

colleagues. They will follow the same rules, pay the same fees, and be governed by the same licensing board.

The typical path to a license requires a person to pay for education and training. This can be expensive. This bill doesn't eliminate government-approved training for workers. And it doesn't upend the traditional path to licensure. Instead, the bill creates another path for licensed jobs. It allows people to work toward their license through on-the-job training, all while taking home a paycheck. The bill also protects apprentices from discrimination, as it prevents apprentices from taking exams or paying fees that aren't required to other licensure applicants.

The Maryland Earn and Learn Act of 2022 will strengthen the apprenticeship system in Maryland by opening up apprenticeship opportunities to workers and job creators. Based on the above information I am asking for a favorable report on HB 1000.