

## Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 668 Teacher Degree Apprenticeship

House Ways and Means Committee  
March 29, 2023

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The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 668, which would establish the Teacher Apprenticeship Startup Grant Program in the Maryland Department of Labor, require a sponsor participating in a teacher apprenticeship program to establish a paid apprenticeship that develops certain career paths in education, and require a sponsor to develop a high school level apprenticeship in coordination with the CTE Committee and other stakeholders. This legislation would also authorize the Department to award up to \$500,000 to a sponsor for the development and launch of a teacher apprenticeship program.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

As we face a statewide educator shortage, with a staggering 2,572 vacancies on the first day of SY 2022-2023, we are more mindful than ever of the need to scale programs that encourage young people to consider and train for careers in public education.<sup>1</sup> Apprenticeships are proven as an effective, equitable approach to strengthening the education workforce. Last year, U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh and U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona issued joint guidance urging

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<sup>1</sup> Regulations Deep Dive: Educator Preparation and Licensure Updates. Maryland State Department of Education (January 2023).

<https://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2023/0124/RegulationsDeepDiveEducatorPreparationLicensureJan2023.pdf>



states to develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) to address widespread educator shortages.<sup>2</sup> To ensure the most promising outcomes, we urge that unions representing school employees are consulted at every stage of implementation regardless of their sponsorship status, and that they retain the option to participate as co-sponsors, where appropriate. We thank the bill sponsor for his efforts to this end.

MSEA supports investments in educator training for aspiring educators enrolled in teacher preparation programs and career changers working to earn their teaching certification. This legislation presents a unique approach that would help high school students earn dual enrollment credits while appealing to those considering a career working in public schools.

**We urge the Committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 668.**

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<sup>2</sup> Joint Dear Colleague Letter (August 2022). <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/22-0119-joint-dcl-signed-ed.pdf>