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Walter L. Simmons, President

Bill Number:	Senate Bill 33
Title:	More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2024
Committee:	Education, Energy, and the Environment
Hearing Date:	February 7, 2024
Position:	FAVORABLE

Employ Prince George's, Inc. ("EPG") is a nonprofit organization based in Prince George's County, Maryland. EPG serves as the Administrative and Fiscal Agent of the Prince George's County Local Workforce Development Board and is responsible for regulating policy development and the administration of workforce activities related to services and programs funded by the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). Under the leadership of EPG, the Prince George's County Local Workforce Development Area serves over 30,000 jobseekers and 4,000 businesses annually.

Senate Bill 33 aligns with our organization's mission to expand access to career and technical education programs for students across the state. Specifically, by encouraging students to pursue hands-on training and industry-recognized credentials in high-demand fields, such as healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing, this legislation will better prepare them for the jobs of the future.

Additionally, this bill promotes collaboration between schools, businesses, and community organizations, which is essential for ensuring that our education and workforce development systems are aligned with the needs of employers. By fostering partnerships between educators and industry leaders, we can create pathways to success for all students, regardless of their background or zip code.

Finally, by removing financial barriers for students seeking to take apprenticeship entrance or industrial certification exams, this legislation ensures that all students have access to these opportunities regardless of their financial circumstances.

Senate Bill 33 represents a significant step forward in providing our students with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed in today's rapidly evolving workforce. Therefore, EPG respectfully urges a favorable report.