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Walter L. Simmons, President

Bill Number: House Bill 11
Title: Workforce Development and Adult Learning – Leasing Training Program – Establishment
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Hearing Date: January 30, 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.

Last year, EPG and the Maryland Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) partnered to create the Leasing Training Academy (LTA), a comprehensive training program that recruits, trains, and connects students with leasing professional careers in Maryland’s housing industry at no cost to the student. To assist with recruiting, training, and hiring, the LTA has partnered with more than twenty residential unit owners and management companies who create employment opportunities for LTA graduates and contribute valuable programmatic insights.

The LTA recently completed its fourth cohort in Prince George’s County and has secured funding to expand the LTA into Baltimore County beginning in May of this year. In 2024, the LTA expects to train 96 students, 48 in Prince George’s County and 48 in Baltimore County. Following graduation, the overwhelming majority of LTA participants are connected with good-paying jobs with full benefits. Many of these graduates are also provided discounted housing through their employment.

Under House Bill 11, “designated partnerships” eligible to receive Leasing Training Program funding must (1) train and connect jobseekers with careers as leasing professionals in the residential housing industry in the State and (2) have experience training and connecting jobseekers with careers as leasing professionals with landlords that manage more than 100 residential units in the State and manage residential rental units in multiple counties. The LTA partnership between EPG and MMHA qualifies as a designated partnership under this definition.

House Bill 11 would allow EPG to better serve jobseekers in Prince George’s County while complementing the ongoing effort to address Maryland’s housing shortage. For these reasons, EPG respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 11.