

February 19, 2025

To: Members of the Senate Finance Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: **Support Senate Bill (SB) 431 with Amendments -
Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act**

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents approximately 200 electrical contractors who employ approximately 15,000 workers in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, IEC Chesapeake has approximately 1,000 registered apprentices in the electrical trade including low voltage apprentices.

IEC Chesapeake supports Governor Moore's efforts to strengthen apprenticeships in Maryland. The construction industry is the number one industry that utilizes apprenticeships and IEC Chesapeake offers the following amendments to Senate Bill 431 which IEC believes would strengthen the apprenticeship program for the construction industry.

Amendment 1

On Page 3, Lines 7-19, clarify the bill language to ensure future licenses such as a low voltage license are included.

Amendment 2

On Page 4, Lines 3-5, IEC Chesapeake suggests that hazardous occupations in Maryland be eligible for an apprentice/journey worker ratio change since the U.S. Department of Labor currently allows a ratio change for hazardous occupations.

Amendment 3

On Pages 5-6, IEC Chesapeake supports the establishment of a Subcommittee under the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC) to address Youth Apprenticeships.

Amendment 4

On Page 10, Lines 27-29 and on Page 11, Lines 1-2, IEC Chesapeake supports a reduction in the number of months of employment from seven to three months. (Explanation: IEC Chesapeake recommends a 90- day period so that it better aligns with the realities of hiring apprentices in the construction industry. With a seven month eligibility period, companies would delay hiring until January or until the fall of the following year to enroll students into the programs because most hiring of apprentices in the construction industry occurs in the summer. Another option would be to consider the number of hours worked rather than months.)

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Shmelzer, Executive Director of IEC Chesapeake, at 301-646-0197 or at gshmelzer@iec-chesapeake.com or Kevin O’Keeffe at 410-382-7844 or at kevin@kokeeffelaw.com.

About Us

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents members throughout Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Our headquarters are located in Laurel, Maryland. IEC Chesapeake has an extensive apprenticeship program for training electricians. In addition, IEC Chesapeake promotes green economic growth by providing education and working with contractor members, industry partners, government policy makers and inspectors to increase the use of renewable energy.