



Senate Bill 431

Position: Favorable

Committee: Senate Finance

Date: February 19, 2025

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Senate Bill 431 (SB 431) modernizes the state's apprenticeship system by expanding the definition of a qualifying apprenticeship, ensuring more Marylanders can access career training programs that align with industry needs. **By creating opportunities to increase the allowable apprentice-to-journeyperson ratio in non-hazardous occupations beyond 1:1, SB 431 enhances small business participation in apprenticeship programs, creates economic mobility for Maryland's workers, and expands economic opportunity for all Marylanders.**

Additionally, the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program will provide much-needed support for employers investing in apprenticeship programs. By allowing businesses offset costs related to recruitment, training, and retention, this initiative makes apprenticeships a more viable and scalable solution for closing Maryland's workforce gaps.

Implementation of SB 431 should prioritize employer flexibility, minimal administrative burdens, and broad industry access to apprenticeship programs. The Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development must serve as a business-friendly resource, streamlining participation and clarifying apprentice-to-journeyperson ratio adjustments. A favorable report on SB 431

Expanding access to apprenticeship opportunities is a priority for the Chamber and broader business community, and SB 431 takes a critical step in addressing Maryland's workforce needs. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests **a favorable report on SB 431.**