

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 493
Economic Matters

(Delegates Simmons and Kramer)

Finance

Task Force to Study Economic Development and Apprenticeships

This bill establishes the 19-member Task Force to Study Economic Development and Apprenticeships. The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) must provide staffing for the task force. The task force must (1) primarily research the effectiveness of apprenticeship programs in other states and international programs, particularly those in Germany and Switzerland and those in which U.S. businesses participate abroad; (2) consider how existing State apprenticeship programs could be improved based on those programs; (3) address the contribution of secondary schools to successful apprenticeship programs and make specified recommendations; (4) determine whether a major expansion of apprenticeship in the State, through specified programs, is appropriate and feasible; (5) if a major expansion is determined appropriate and feasible, develop and recommend a multiyear expansion plan; and (6) develop and recommend for implementation in the State a pilot apprenticeship program based on the study and research of the task force. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1, 2013.

The bill terminates December 31, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. DLS can staff the task force, and any expense reimbursements for task force members can be handled with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: A national apprenticeship and training program was established in federal law in 1937; however, Maryland has chosen to operate its own apprenticeship program. In 1962, the General Assembly passed an apprenticeship and training law, which created a 12-member Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC). Within the framework established in federal law, the State's apprenticeship and training law also established the guidelines, responsibilities, and obligations for training providers, and it created specified guarantees for workers who become apprenticed. MATC formulates apprenticeship policies, registers standards and agreements, determines which skilled trades are apprenticeable, and formulates and adopts standards of apprenticeship that safeguard the welfare of all apprentices. MATC serves in a regulatory and advisory capacity by providing guidance and oversight to the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP), within the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR), which is responsible for the daily oversight of State apprenticeship programs.

Chapter 687 of 2009 created the State Apprenticeship Training Fund to promote pre-apprenticeship programs and other workforce development programs in the State's public secondary schools and community colleges, to help prepare students to enter apprenticeship training programs. In 2011, with the goal of increasing the level of participation in apprenticeships, DLLR launched the Apprenticeship Maryland initiative, which works collaboratively with partners in State government, private-sector organizations, the labor community, and higher education to (1) promote apprenticeship and training opportunities to jobseekers and employers; (2) identify avenues to expand opportunities to earn while learning; and (3) improve skills training. The program also seeks to expand registered apprenticeships to nontraditional fields and identify strategies that allow apprenticeships to grow by working with partner organizations.

The Governor's P-20 Leadership Council of Maryland includes stakeholders from the education, workforce, and economic development communities, for the purpose of discussing policy priorities and alignment of various elements of State education and workforce systems. The Governor's Workforce Investment Board is the State's chief policy-making body for workforce development.

According to a 2003 report issued by the University of Quebec, the apprenticeship program in Germany was formally adopted by the Vocational Training Act of 1969. The Act covers apprenticeship programs in industry, craft trades, commerce, administration, and agriculture, among others. The German apprenticeship program is often referred to as a "dual training system," which means individuals attend a vocational school and also complete apprenticeships with one or more firms concurrent with their formal education.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Business and Economic Development; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; European Universities Continuing Education Network; University of Quebec; Department of Legislative Services

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