

MARYLAND WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

SB868

Apprenticeship 2030

Position: FAVORABLE, with amendments

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee:

The Maryland Workforce Alliance (MWA) is a statewide organization of trade associations, labor unions, and apprenticeship providers united by the common goal of building a world-class workforce in Maryland. MWA advocates for common sense workforce training legislation that will increase investment in skills training programs that help Marylanders acquire the skills needed to obtain jobs in high wage, high growth occupations; and address critical employment shortages in emerging and established industries. A majority of MWA members have endorsed Apprenticeship 2030, and we ask the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB868.

MWA proudly worked with the Kirwan Commission to develop their recommendations for Career Readiness, Youth Apprenticeships, and Registered Apprenticeships. SB868 is designed to help Maryland meet the goal of “45% of students achieving a market valuable occupational credential by 12th grade” that is established in The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. SB868 is a simple bill that aligns existing funds to achieve the Kirwan goals using existing funds.

The Alliance is enthused about this bill but suggests additional amendments. One amendment would guarantee that EARN grantees will retain their eligibility to receive funds through the Career and Technology Education Innovation Grant by grandfathering them in. The other amendment provides additional funding for apprenticeship startups so they don’t have to compete with EARN grantees for funding.

Apprenticeships are a worthy investment in our future that benefits students, workers, employers, and the economy as a whole. MWA respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report, with amendments.

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