

MARYLAND WORKFORCE

A L L I N C E

Date: March 23, 2021
Committee: Economic Matters
Legislation: Testimony on SB 307 Labor and Employment - Direct Care Workforce
Innovation Program
Position: Favorable

Good Afternoon Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee. On behalf of the Maryland Workforce Alliance (“MWA”), we appreciate the opportunity to share our position on SB 307. The Maryland Workforce Alliance is a coalition of 36 trade associations, labor unions and apprenticeship providers that have come together to support common sense workforce legislation. The Maryland Workforce Alliance unites trade associations, unions, and nonprofits to promote a world-class workforce in Maryland. We endeavor to bridge the skills gap and address critical employment shortages in key fields and to forge pathways that connect employers, apprenticeship sponsors, and job seekers.

The Maryland Workforce Alliance works for the creation of jobs in markets experiencing labor shortages through career and technical education in public schools, certificate programs in community colleges, youth apprenticeship programs and registered apprenticeship programs. MWA’s work ensures there is increased engagement in the development and execution of workforce skills training programs.

Senate Bill 307 establishes a Direct Care Workforce Innovation Program (“DCWIP”). The purpose of the Program is to provide matching grants to eligible entities to create and expand on successful recruitment and retention plans that address barriers to expanding the number of direct care workers. The goal is to ensure the availability of trained direct care workers across the State.

The DCWIP established under this bill coincides with the goals of the Maryland Workforce Alliance by increasing the number of trained direct care workers. The Alliance works for the creation of jobs in markets experiencing labor shortages through career and technical education. Maryland and other states throughout the United States are facing staffing shortages in various occupations in the healthcare field. SB 307 will assist with this challenge. Finally, the matching grant component and the mandated appropriation ensures continued enhancement of the Program.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the Committee on Senate Bill 307.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie P. Anderson,
Maryland Workforce Alliance