



Eastern Atlantic States
REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

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POSITION: FAVORABLE
HB37 / SB35: Procurement – Prevailing Wage – Applicability

House Economic Matters Committee
Senate Finance Committee

Honorable Delegates and Senators:

On behalf of the Eastern Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), please accept this letter in strong support for HB37 / SB35, Procurement-Prevailing Wage-Applicability.

This legislation is a critically important job creating and stimulative measure that is necessary, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the sluggish construction sector. We understand this dynamic better than most workforce teams, as we represent over 41,000 of the most skilled construction workers in the nation, including some 3,000 carpenters right here in the State of Maryland.

When structured properly, state Prevailing Wage programs enable us to rigorously train young local apprentices for outstanding workforce and career opportunities that include good wages and benefits. These also afford our local apprentices with career training and mobility opportunities, as they ascend into Journeymen positions, compete for projects across the region, and advance the strongest standards of construction excellence.

At its best, the program is an outstanding stimulative tool for local and regional economies. However, when not structured properly, the program is unable to unleash the full economic power of the workforce. That's where Maryland lags behind. With the nation's highest dollar threshold of \$500,000, and its burdensome 50 percent state funding threshold, taken together, these hurdles present challenges for our small and medium size contractor teams, who are simply unable to meet Maryland's high thresholds. This also presents challenges in our ability to train and hire our local apprentices, which creates longer term workforce development challenges.

For these reasons, we implore the General Assembly to improve the Prevailing Wage program by passing HB37 / SB35, and we respectfully ask for a favorable committee report on this important legislation.