

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building,
3 East Wing 11 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: SB 191 Labor and Employment - Hiring - Higher Education Requirements (Give Me a Chance Act)

Dear Chairman Kelley:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in SB 191 Labor and Employment - Hiring - Higher Education Requirements (Give Me a Chance Act). MBIA Opposes the Act in its current version.

This bill would prevent employer4s from considering higher education as a factor in screening applicant for open positions.

MBIA respectfully opposes this measure on grounds of unfairness. One of the mechanisms that employees use to distinguish themselves is by gaining the necessary accreditation and skillset through higher education in order to take positions in specific highly specialized fields. These fields often require an academic understanding of the industry and are designed to help build the practical skills necessary to succeed. In today's high-speed information-based world, many positions that require higher education require a specialized skillset that can only be obtained through that medium. Architects, engineers, financial managers and many more positions all require specialized training that employers need to know that potential recruits have mastered. Denying employers the opportunity to consider the education of applicants would deny employers crucial pieces of information in considering whether they have the skillset necessary to do the position for which they are applying.

While other avenues of gaining specialized knowledge exist, such as certifications, this would unfairly advantage those paths to specialization that could be explored during the application process over higher education, disadvantaging people that have spent a great deal of time and money to build those credentials. This ultimately will create an extremely limited pool of potential applicants and deny opportunities to people that have earned their credentials.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Senate Finance Committee