



Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony on: SB0121– More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2023

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 24, 2023

Bill Contact: Senator Jim Rosapepe

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as several neighboring jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that promote equity across all our diverse communities, including implementing the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to improve public education and career opportunities for all students. Enactment of SB0121 will expand career opportunities for students and potentially reduce costs to students and their families.

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future recognizes that many public school graduates will not choose to attend college and therefore emphasizes the need for increasing the number of trade schools and apprenticeship programs as well as establishment of programs that will result in issuance to high school students of industry-recognized occupational credentials. One goal of the Blueprint is that, by 2031, 45% of high school graduates will have completed a registered apprenticeship program or have an industry-recognized occupational credential. SB0121 includes common sense provisions aimed at accelerating compliance with this goal.

Under the proposed legislation, schools would be authorized to share, with apprenticeship program sponsors and employers registered with the Maryland Department of Labor, a student’s college and career readiness software program results that are used to help school systems and schools align student strengths and interests to post-secondary schools and careers. Importantly, before sharing could take place, consent will be required from the student or his or her parent or guardian. Furthermore, since many schools currently undertake far more effort to promote opportunities to attend college, SB0121 would direct schools to provide expanded visibility for job opportunities and apprenticeships. Finally, some school systems currently pay the costs for students to take SAT/ACT exams. Under SB0121, school systems that pay such costs would also be required to pay for students’ apprenticeship entrance exams or skill credential exams.

Enactment of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future was a significant achievement, but enhancing education for all students in Maryland is so important that the General Assembly must not rest on its laurels. Legislation such as SB0121 must be enacted to permit effective and timely implementation of the Blueprint. Therefore, DTMG strongly supports SB0121 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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