



The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Madam Chair Melony Griffith,
Vice-Chair Katherine Klausmeier,
And members of the Senate Finance Committee

RE: Support for SB 413 Apprenticeship 2030 Commission

My name is Tom Hood, CPA,CGMA and I am a resident of Baltimore City and currently the EVP of Business Growth & Engagement for the AICPA-CIMA, a global membership organization with nearly 700,000 CPAs, CGMAs and finance and accounting students as our members. These CPAs and CGMAs work in public practice, private industry, government, non-profit, and education. I was formerly the CEO of the Maryland Association of CPAs for 24 years where I testified before this body numerous times.

I am here to testify in **support of SB 413** to create an Apprenticeship Commission in Maryland and its intent, *"to examine and make recommendations to expand access to apprenticeships to reduce skill shortages in high-demand occupations"*.

This Commission is essential as our state and country face severe talent shortages in high-demand occupations like accounting and finance (see attached [*"The case for accounting and finance as a high-demand occupation"*](#)).

As accounting and finance teams look to widen candidate pools, upskill current employees, and develop their leadership, we believe apprenticeship programs are an invaluable, versatile tool with a proven track record. By expanding access to good-paying jobs and promoting diversity in the profession, the program can help to create a more inclusive and equitable economy that benefits everyone.

In fact, the AICPA-CIMA has developed the first professional apprenticeship for Accounting and Finance in the US. Our Apprenticeship for the occupation of 'Finance Business Partner', approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and registered with the Maryland Department of Labor is an example of a new breed of 'professional apprenticeships' recognized at National Apprenticeship Week this past November by FLOTUS, Dr. Jill Biden and US DOL Secretary Marty Walsh.

Working with the Maryland Association of CPAs, we aim to use this new Apprenticeship in the State of Maryland to expand access to jobs in corporate finance and accounting supported by a \$120,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Labor. This apprenticeship offers



apprentices the opportunity to gain high-demand competencies and provides a path for skill development and job growth along with a globally recognized designation as a CGMA and a Certificate as a Finance Business Partner from the US Department of Labor.

We ask for a positive report on SB 413 and want to note our appreciation and offer to help the Commission in meeting the talent demands for the accounting and finance profession.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/Tom Hood/

J. Thomas Hood, CPA, CGMA
EVP Business Engagement & Growth
AICPA-CIMA

CC: Nick Manis, Manis Canning & Associates
Rebekah Brown, CPA, CEO of the Maryland Association of CPAs