



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

Senate Bill 413

Apprenticeship 2030 Commission

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 23, 2023

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 413 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would establish the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission to examine and make recommendations to expand access to apprenticeships to reduce skill shortages in high-demand occupations and provide affordable training for career pathways for young people to participate in apprenticeships.

This bill comes at the ideal time as the public and private sectors struggle to hire and retain professionals with expertise in the trades, and as social trends are shifting in favor of alternatives to traditional post-K-12 university experiences.

Maryland counties have historically supported alternative education and career paths but doing so has recently become an even greater priority for local governments in response to the shifting labor market and workforce demands. Counties, like other employers, continue to face a shortage of vocational trade staff to hire or contract for critical infrastructure and public works projects. This raises county costs and pushes back project completion on key projects like building new schools and repairing roads and bridges – and Marylanders suffer for it.

SB 413 shares many of these same priorities and goals, and counties appreciate the additional guidance and assistance the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission would offer to the critical work locals are already doing. **As such, counties would like to participate on the Commission and respectfully ask for an amendment to SB 413 to add local representatives – one from county government and one from local workforce development boards – to serve on the commission.**

SB 413 is another step in the right direction to adjust Maryland's near- and long-term workforce to meet modern needs and opportunities, and counties remain enthusiastic to partner with the State via this bill and other initiatives. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS SB 413 WITH AMENDMENTS**.