

MHLA

Maryland Hotel Lodging Association

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association

In Support of
HB 837 – More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2024
February 14, 2024
House Ways and Means Committee

The Maryland Hotel Lodging Association (MHLA) serves as the sole statewide trade association dedicated to advocacy for Maryland’s 750+ hotels. Altogether our industry provides the state with \$1 billion in state and local taxes, \$5 billion in total wages and salaries, and \$9 billion in total gross domestic product.

House Bill 837 would generally require school systems to assist students with registered apprenticeship programs in a manner similar to how they assist students in preparing for admission to postsecondary institutions.

The lodging industry offers three apprenticeship tracks¹ that are nationally registered with the US Department of Labor:

- Lodging Management Apprenticeship Program
- Hotel Cook Apprenticeship Program
- Maintenance Employee Apprenticeship Program

The programs were designed with the goal of aligning certification with the fundamentals of apprenticeship and were constructed using competencies found in leading American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) certifications. Apprentices in these programs can earn while they learn, but also acquire industry certifications and credit toward a college degree.

The AHLA Foundation has apprentices working in almost all 50 states across the country – from major hotel brands to large and small management companies and independent properties. The lodging industry offers more than 200 pathways toward a rewarding career and apprenticeship is a great option for a training program that combines on the job learning with classroom education for in demand occupations.

We hope that Maryland’s lodging employers may increasingly utilize apprenticeship as a recruitment and retention tool for building our future workforce. We support this proposed legislation as a means to that end, and respectfully request a Favorable Report on HB 837.

¹ [Apprenticeship Program \(ahlafoundation.org\)](http://ahlafoundation.org)