



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of SB511-Labor and Employment-Apprenticeship Standards-Ratio of Apprenticeships and Journeypersons

Dear Chair Pamlea Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeyer and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Today, I am presenting SB511 – Labor and Employment – Apprenticeship Standards-Ratio of Apprenticeships and Journeypersons to meet the expectations of the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission and rapidly growing industry, the apprenticeship program in Maryland should be altered to a 3:1 ratio of apprentices to journeypersons.

Several states have adopted a ratio of 3:1 for more hazardous occupations such as electrical work or plumbing. This bill seeks to apply that same ratio to non-traditional jobs such as software programmers or environmental care specialists to keep up with the demands for establishing more job positions.

Additionally, this bill also provides an alleviation of the administrative burden that small businesses must deal with in registering apprenticeship programs. With the current 1:1 ratio, small businesses have no incentive to partake in apprenticeships because of the cost and time involved in establishing the program. Larger businesses have the support of unions to handle these administrative duties, whereas smaller businesses who don't have such aide must take this burden on themselves.

Under current law, the 1:1 ratio would require the hiring of three journeypersons to bring on three more apprentices. Increasing the ratio to a 3:1 of apprentices to journeypersons would make it much more worthwhile to hire apprentices. Expanding the ratio would help to put Maryland in a position to meet its future goals of establishing 60,000 registered apprenticeships and having 50% of high school graduates participating in an apprenticeship by 2031¹.

SB511 seeks to remove the barriers that have been preventing the apprenticeship program in Maryland from reaching its highest potential. Therefore, I am proposing SB511, which would help to expand the apprenticeship industry in Maryland and create more job avenues for prospective workers.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable committee report of SB511.

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/bills/sb/sb0104T.pdf>