



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 1276 - Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements
(Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)
House Health and Government Operations Committee
February 27, 2024**

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1276. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

HB 1276 requires state public works contracts for construction, alteration, and repair work to use registered apprentices on 25% of the applicable labor hours. To ensure compliance with these requirements, HB 1276 requires that contractors and subcontractors on these covered projects submit monthly reports to the Department of Labor with the names of apprentices, the names of their apprenticeship programs, their apprenticeship program registration number, along with the total number of hours worked by apprentices broken down by craft. Failure to comply with the apprenticeship requirements for covered projects would prohibit contractors from working on public works projects for 3 years.

Our unions helped create and run high-quality apprenticeship programs for well over a century. These programs help workers find the training they need for well-paying careers with benefits in a variety of skilled industries. This is all done with worker voices directly at the table making sure that apprentices are treated with respect and dignity. The state can help support the growth of apprenticeship programs by ensuring that its own public works programs are investing in expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities.

The Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO was proud to participate, along with three of our union affiliates, on the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission. Though we disagreed with some of the proposals considered by the commission, we strongly supported proposals to create registered apprenticeship preferences in procurement and registered apprenticeship utilization requirements in state contracts.

We urge a favorable report on HB 1276.