

January 22, 2025

To: Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: **Support Senate Bill (SB) 161- State Department of Education - Driver Education and Career and Technical Education - Funding (Driver Education and Career Education Act of 2025)**

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents approximately 200 electrical contractors who employ approximately 15,000 workers in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, IEC Chesapeake has nearly 1,000 electrical apprentices. As one of the three largest apprenticeship programs in Maryland, IEC Chesapeake supports SB161 which provides funding for driver education and career and technical education.

Having a driver's license expands work opportunities for young adults. SB161 will expand the opportunity to earn a driver's license which will enable apprentices to get to their job sites. The nature of the construction industry is that job sites are continuously changing and in some cases not reachable by public transportation.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Shmelzer, Executive Director of IEC Chesapeake, at 301-646-0197 or at gshmelzer@iec-chesapeake.com or Kevin O'Keeffe at 410-382-7844 or at kevin@kokeeffelaw.com.

About Us

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents members throughout Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Our headquarters are located in Laurel, Maryland. IEC Chesapeake has an extensive apprenticeship program for training electricians. In addition, IEC Chesapeake promotes green economic growth by providing education and working with contractor members, industry partners, government policy makers and inspectors to increase the use of renewable energy.