

Testimony of Branndon Jackson.pdf

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Position: FAV

Testimony of Brannndon Jackson
Before the Maryland General Assembly
Budget and Taxation Committee
Senate Bill – SB161
Public Hearing on the State Department of Education
- Driver Education and Career and Technical
Education - Funding

Good afternoon, esteemed Chairman Guy Guzzone and Vice Chairman Jim Rosapepe of the Budget and Taxation Committee. My name is Brannndon Jackson, and I am a resident of Largo, Maryland. I am a passionate advocate for education and youth development and have long worked to ensure that all students have access to opportunities that prepare them for success in life.

I am here today to express my strong support for Senate Bill SB161, which aims to enhance funding for career and technical education (CTE) and driver's education programs. This legislation is vital to providing students with the skills they need to be both college- and career-ready, including the ability to obtain a driver's license—a critical tool for accessing employment and educational opportunities.

This bill also plays a crucial role in advancing workforce development, equipping young people with the training and certifications needed to pursue meaningful career paths. For many students, particularly those from

underserved communities, these programs are a lifeline to greater opportunities and a brighter future.

I want to stress the importance of restoring driver's education as a core offering in our educational system. The absence of this training in high schools has created significant barriers for students who cannot afford private instruction, leaving them at a disadvantage when it comes to mobility and independence. Senate Bill SB161 provides a pathway to address this gap, ensuring that all students—regardless of their socioeconomic background—can develop the skills needed to operate a vehicle safely and responsibly.

I commend the efforts to prioritize this legislation and respectfully request that the committee include programs like these in the annual budget. Doing so will significantly expand access to driver education and career and technical training, preparing students to become productive and contributing members of our community.

I urge the committee to vote favorably on Senate Bill SB161.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

SB161 Driver Education and Career Education Act of

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: FAV

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Support of
Senate Bill 161 – State Department of Education
Driver Education and Career and Technical Education – Funding
(Driver Education and Career Education Act of 2025)**

January 22, 2025

Senate Bill 161 would require the Governor to include in the operating budget for each fiscal year 2027 to 2032 funds to the Maryland State Department of Education to support students with access to driver education and career and technical education. The Board supports the spirit of this bill. Currently, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners leverages philanthropy to provide driver education to CTE students. Some apprenticeships and entry level positions require a driver's license (i.e. Local 486 apprenticeships, BCFD, BGE to name a few). There has always been more demand than seats available.

The Board welcomes this legislation and finds it immensely helpful in allowing our students the opportunity to gain practical work experience in areas in which a driver's license is needed. For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports Senate Bill 161 and urges a FAVORABLE report.

SB161 PG CO Support

Uploaded by: Jolene Ivey

Position: FAV



Jolene Ivey
Chair
At-Large Council Member

January 20, 2025

Maryland Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Senator Benon's Senate Bill 161. Its purpose is to provide the budget for driver's education to high school students, to help prepare them for the ability to acquire a driver's license which is often required to obtain and hold employment. In addition, this bill will support other workforce development initiatives that will help students be successful in their career paths.

This legislation supports the education needed to help students become productive and contributing members of our community. Driver's education remains important and necessary even though it is no longer provided in high schools.

It is for these reasons I ask you to support Senate Bill 161.

Sincerely,

Jolene Ivey
Chair, Prince George's County Council
Council Member At-Large

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Uploaded by: Kevin O'Keeffe

Position: FAV

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.

William Taylor Senate Bill 161 Hearing Testimony

Uploaded by: William Taylor

Position: FAV

Testimony
of
William C. Taylor
Before the
Maryland General Assembly
Budget and Taxation Committee
Senate Bill – SB 161
Public Hearing
on the
State Department of Education - Driver Education and Career
and Technical Education - Funding

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. My name is William C. Taylor of Fort Washington, Maryland.

I am the Founder and Executive Director of the Coalition for Public Safety Training in Schools Incorporated.

My purpose for being here today is in support of Senate Bill 161 for the career and technical education to provide students with the skills and driver's education to become college and career-ready by having a driver's license in hand.

In addition, this bill will support other workforce development initiatives that will enable students to be successful in their career paths.

The Coalition for Public Safety in Training in Schools has developed a deep and abiding commitment to ensure there is a balanced representation in educational opportunities for our students.

I am advocating for opportunities that will support education and allow all students to become productive and contributing members of our community.

We cannot afford to lose sight of driver education which is no longer provided in high schools.

It is critical for our students to have the opportunity to learn and obtain the skills necessary to operate a vehicle.

I applaud the enhanced focus on Senate Bill 161 and ask this committee to take the necessary action to include the Coalition for Public Training in Schools Incorporate in the annual

budget to help increase the number of students to have access to driver education and career and technical training.

I ask the committee to vote favorably on Senate Bill SB 161 .

Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee.