



February 21, 2024

Economic Matters Committee
C.T Wilson, Chair
Brian M Crosby, Vice Chair
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Subject: Support HB 1017- Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements
(Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act of 2025)**

Dear Honorable Members of the House Economic Matters Committee.

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for the Apprenticeship Utilization Act of 2025 (HB 1017). As a licensed commercial painting contractor, I understand the critical importance of a highly skilled workforce in ensuring the success of our projects, and I believe this legislation is key to building that workforce.

The commercial painting industry demands precision, expertise, and, above all, safety. Workers must be trained to handle complex tasks such as applying coatings to a variety of surfaces, working at great heights, and using potentially hazardous chemicals. Registered apprenticeship programs play a vital role in developing this expertise and ensuring that workers are equipped with the necessary skills to perform safely and efficiently.

By requiring the use of registered apprenticeships on public works projects, HB 1017 provides an opportunity to invest in both the quality of our workforce and the safety of our projects. Apprenticeships not only teach workers the technical skills required for high-quality work but also prioritize safety training, which is crucial in an industry like ours. Ensuring that workers are

trained to safely handle materials and equipment reduces accidents, enhances productivity, and ultimately leads to better project outcomes.

The need for a well-trained workforce has never been more urgent. In 2020, Maryland allocated \$572 million to workforce development programs, highlighting the state's commitment to preparing workers for successful careers. Supporting registered apprenticeship programs is a practical and effective way to ensure that workers are fully prepared for the demands of commercial painting, while also contributing to the long-term growth of Maryland's economy.

Additionally, apprenticeship programs provide a direct pathway for workers to earn while they learn, which is essential in fields like commercial painting, where hands-on experience is critical. These programs offer individuals the opportunity to gain real-world skills, avoid the burden of student debt, and transition smoothly into stable, high-paying jobs. They also promote diversity by providing access to training opportunities for people from all backgrounds, helping to create a more inclusive workforce.

Registered apprenticeship programs also contribute significant resources to workforce development, with over \$10 million invested annually in training workers in the construction trades. This substantial investment in education helps to maintain the high standards necessary to meet the growing demands of Maryland's infrastructure projects.

I strongly urge you to support HB 1017, as it will ensure that Maryland has a well-trained, skilled, and safe workforce for the future. By utilizing apprenticeship programs, we can continue to improve the quality of public works projects while creating lasting opportunities for workers in the commercial painting industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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