

**Career & Technical Education**  
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Written Testimony: Bill Number HB0247

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of Bill HB0247. In my role as the Career and Technical Education Supervisor for Frederick County Public Schools, ensuring that students have access to programs that will support high wage, high skill, in-demand careers is vitally important. For our students that intend to go directly to the workforce and particularly for our unaccompanied homeless students, having the opportunity to participate in these on-site work-based learning experiences is imperative.

However, transportation to participate in these programs is a key barrier for our homeless students. Frederick County is the geographically largest county in the state of Maryland; however, our public transportation system lacks the capacity to meet the needs of students seeking work-based learning. Likewise, the school system lacks the capability to transport the 1,200 work-based learning students to their job sites. This means that students must provide their own transportation to participate in these programs.

Bill HB0247 would shorten the amount of time that our unaccompanied homeless students would need between completing their learner's permit requirements and becoming a certified driver. Having a license up to six months earlier would decrease the barrier to employment and increase these student's earning potential. Participation in the Maryland Youth Apprenticeship, provides an opportunity for our students to earn while they learn. The program's success has been rooted in the school system's ability to partner with local businesses to provide training, industry certifications and 450 hours of paid employment under the supervision of a mentor. These programs increase students career skills as well as their potential earning capacity upon graduation and many lead to full time employment.

Supporting this bill, helps our most vulnerable population thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristine H. Pearl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristine H. Pearl