

March 5, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair  
The Honorable Antonio Hayes, Vice Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker, Maryland Director, Baltimore DC Metro Building Trades Council on  
SB 688: Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship  
Utilization Act)  
Position: FAVORABLE**

Thank you Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony on SB 688. My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT's 28 affiliates represent more than 30,000 union construction workers across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The BDCBT supports SB 688, which establishes a minimum threshold on public works construction projects for hours worked by registered apprentices. The bill calls for a minimum threshold of 20 percent, which can be adjusted by the Maryland Secretary of Labor.

The Building Trades unions have been operating high-quality apprenticeship programs for more than a century. Our programs provide workers with the training they need for well-paying construction careers with family-supporting wages and benefits.

Apprenticeship utilization policies are important because they spur demand for apprentice labor, which in turn helps ensure a pipeline of skilled and experienced workers for future projects. A number of states already have apprentice utilization requirements for their public works projects. For instance, Washington State requires at least 15 percent of labor hours to be completed by apprentices on public works projects with an estimated cost of \$1 million or more. Nevada's requirements specify that public works projects must employ at least one apprentice for a minimum percentage of total labor hours for each type of work performed on the project.

Maryland can help support the growth of apprenticeship programs by ensuring that its own public works programs are investing in registered apprenticeship opportunities.

The BDCBT urges a favorable report on SB 668.

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