

SB0431_MSDE_FAV

Uploaded by: Akilah Alleyne, Ph.D.

Position: FAV

TO: Senate Committee on Finance

BILL: Senate Bill 0431- Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

DATE: February 19, 2025

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Board of Education support Senate Bill 431. This bill seeks to streamline licensing requirements for journey plumbers, restructure the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program by establishing new offices and incentive programs, and repeal the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee while enhancing registered apprenticeship development efforts within the state. MSDE recognizes the importance of policies that align with Blueprint Pillar 3 goals, and we appreciate the bill's commitment to expanding high-quality opportunities for young people to connect with the world of work.

MSDE strongly supports the following provisions in this bill:

- **The Development of a State-Qualified Intermediary Program** – MSDE supports the establishment of this program and emphasizes the importance of our role in evaluating and selecting intermediaries whose applications involve working with youth or school professionals.
- **Collaboration Across Key State Agencies** – We strongly support the requirement for collaboration among the Secretary of Labor, the Governor's Workforce Development Board, and the Department of Commerce in developing the qualified intermediary program. MSDE's inclusion is particularly important when initiatives involve opportunities or strategies that integrate with academic programs of study, ensuring a coordinated alignment between K-12 education and Maryland's broader workforce development strategy.
- **The Establishment of the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program** – This program will expand pathways for students and employers to engage in apprenticeships, directly supporting MSDE's commitment to enhancing career-connected learning opportunities and strengthening Maryland's workforce pipeline.

These components align with our mission of Blueprint goals to ensure all students have access to high-quality educational and career pathways that prepare them for postsecondary success.

We have the following input on implementation for provisions in the bill:

- **Shared Accountability** – MSDE believes that clearly defined accountability systems across Maryland are essential for guiding the implementation of the Blueprint and ensuring meaningful outcomes for all agencies involved in developing talent pipelines. We request the inclusion of specific, well-defined metrics for partner agencies, similar to

those established under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, to ensure the newly established office develops a measurable and transparent strategy for advancing the registered apprenticeship system statewide.

- **Funding Allocation for Youth-Focused Incentives** – The bill proposes a \$5,000,000 annual appropriation from the Governor's budget between 2027-2030 to support the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program. MSDE strongly recommends that a portion of this funding be explicitly allocated for youth-focused apprenticeship incentives, ensuring targeted investments in the high school level of a registered apprenticeship program, as outlined in existing law and policy.

We encourage further discussion to refine these provisions in a way that ensures alignment with Maryland's educational goals.

MSDE appreciates the leadership of the General Assembly in advancing policies that strengthen Maryland's coordinated education and workforce strategy. We look forward to continued collaboration to refine and implement this bill in a way that ensures the best outcomes for students, educators, and employers across the state.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate SB 0431. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne at 410- 767-0504, or akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov

Employ Prince George's - SB 431 Testimony - FAV.pd

Uploaded by: Ardy Kamali

Position: FAV



EMPLOY PRINCE GEORGE'S
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(301) 618-8400
Walter L. Simmons, President

Bill Number:	Senate Bill 431
Title:	Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act
Committee:	Finance
Hearing Date:	February 19, 2025
Position:	FAVORABLE

Employ Prince George's, Inc. ("EPG") is a nonprofit organization that serves as the principal workforce development entity for Prince George's County and is responsible for regulating policy development and the administration of workforce activities related to services and programs funded by the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA).

As an organization committed to advancing economic mobility through workforce development, we enthusiastically support the RAISE Act and the opportunities it presents to expand access to registered apprenticeships across Maryland.

Registered apprenticeships have long been recognized as a powerful tool for bridging the gap between education and employment, particularly in industries experiencing persistent workforce shortages. These programs offer earn-and-learn opportunities that equip individuals with in-demand skills while simultaneously addressing employers' talent needs. However, outdated regulations and restrictive ratios have hampered efforts to scale apprenticeships in Maryland. SB 431 represents a critical step forward by streamlining the process for expanding apprenticeship ratios for nonhazardous occupations.

By empowering the Maryland Department of Labor to adjust these ratios, the RAISE Act will facilitate the growth of apprenticeships in sectors like healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and other high-demand industries essential to Maryland's economic vitality. Likewise, the creation of a dedicated office focused on registered apprenticeship development will enhance the state's ability to coordinate, promote, and support apprenticeship initiatives. A centralized office will refine program approval processes, increase public awareness of apprenticeship opportunities, and ensure alignment with Maryland's broader workforce development goals.

Financial incentives can significantly enhance employer participation in apprenticeship programs, particularly in industries with tight margins or limited hiring capacity. The proposed incentive program will encourage more employers to engage in apprenticeship development while simultaneously opening pathways to well-paying, family-sustaining careers for Maryland residents.

The RAISE Act is more than a legislative proposal; it is an investment in Maryland's future workforce. By modernizing apprenticeship regulations, establishing key support structures, and providing critical incentives, this bill will expand opportunities for Marylanders to build careers in high-demand fields while supplying businesses with the talent they need to thrive. For these reasons, Employ Prince George's respectfully urges the committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 431.

SB 431 Support - MWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Brandon Butler

Position: FAV

MWA Members

Anne Arundel County
Anne Arundel Workforce
Development Corporation *Kirkland
Murray, Executive Director*

Baltimore City
Mayor's Office of Employment
Development
MacKenzie Garvin, Director

Baltimore County
Baltimore County Department of
Economic and Workforce
Development
Jonathan Sachs, Director

Carroll County
Carroll County Workforce
Development
Heather Lee Powell, Manager

Frederick County
Frederick County Workforce
Services
Michelle Day, Director

Howard County
Howard County Office of Workforce
Development
Stephanie Adibe, Director

Lower Shore
Lower Shore Workforce Alliance
(Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester,
Counties)
*Leslie Porter-Cabell, Workforce
Director*

Montgomery County WorkSource
Montgomery, Inc. *Anthony
Featherstone, Executive Director*

Prince George's County
Prince George's County Workforce
Development Board *Walter
Simmons, Executive Director*

Southern Maryland
Southern Maryland Job Source
(Calvert, Charles, & St. Mary's
Counties)
Ruthy Davis, Director

Susquehanna Region
Susquehanna Workforce Network,
Inc. (Cecil & Harford Counties)
Kimberly Justus, Executive Director

Upper Shore
Upper Shore Workforce Investment
Board (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent,
Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties)
*Dan McDermott, Interim Executive
Director*

Western Maryland
Western Maryland Consortium
(Allegany, Garrett &
Washington Counties)
*Amos McCoy, Interim Executive
Director*

February 17, 2025

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

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing you to express the strong support of the Maryland Workforce Association for **SB 431: The Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act**. As the Association of the thirteen local workforce boards in the State of Maryland, we appreciate the Moore-Miller Administration's focus on building Maryland's economy through building the State's workforce. The State's local workforce boards are the boots on the ground connecting job seekers with employment opportunities. We also assist businesses in growing their businesses through investing in their employees through initiatives like Registered Apprenticeships, while also identifying candidates for opening positions.

This bill will continue Maryland's focus on expanding Registered Apprenticeship programs. It also invests in intermediaries to connect businesses with apprenticeship opportunities. We believe that the local workforce boards are the definition of a qualified intermediary, and look forward to working with the Department of Labor on this endeavor. Of note, several of the workforce boards and the Association itself is so committed to the apprenticeship model that we are currently exploring ways in which the workforce boards and Association can serve as not only an intermediary, but a sponsor of Registered Apprenticeship programs. The Association also continues to provide professional development opportunities for front line workforce staff, community college professionals, and K-12 education providers on the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship.

Additionally, the Association supports the utilization of a greater than one-to-one ratio for certain occupations. We believe this is the only way to truly see the apprenticeship growth that the State is seeking.

In short, we strongly support this measure and respectfully ask for the Committee's favorable consideration of this bill. Should you have any questions regarding this testimony, please do not hesitate to reach out to Brandon Butler, the Association's Executive Director at 240.434.5524 or mwaexecdirector@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Kirkland Murray, President
Maryland Workforce Association

BaltimoreCyberSB431Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Bruce Spector

Position: FAV

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair, Senate Finance Committee and Members of the Committee

FROM: Bruce Spector, Chairman of the Board, Baltimore Cyber Range

DATE: February 17th, 2025

RE: SB431 Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Bruce Spector, and I am the Chairman of Baltimore Cyber Range (BCR Cyber), a Maryland-based company dedicated to developing a well-trained cybersecurity workforce that meets the needs of Maryland's economy. Our mission is to equip individuals with hands-on, real-world cybersecurity training to fill the thousands of job vacancies in this critical sector and we are accomplishing this mission with our Cyber Workforce Accelerator.

I am here today to express support for Senate Bill 431 – The Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act, which advances the growth and accessibility of registered apprenticeships across Maryland, including in nontraditional industries such as cybersecurity.

A well-structured apprenticeship system is essential for building a skilled, productive workforce that supports Maryland's economy. Apprenticeships provide individuals with practical, on-the-job training while allowing businesses to develop a talent pipeline that meets their specific workforce needs. The Moore Administration has taken important steps to scale and expand apprenticeships beyond traditional trades, and this legislation reinforces that commitment. By broadening apprenticeship opportunities in fields such as cybersecurity, healthcare, and technology, Maryland will strengthen its workforce and remain competitive in an increasingly digital economy.

Baltimore Cyber Range has direct experience with registered apprenticeships, having previously run a successful registered apprenticeship program. We are currently working to establish a new registered apprenticeship program focused on training professionals for Security Operations Centers (SOCs), a critical area of need within the cybersecurity industry. Through this work, we have seen both the benefits and challenges of implementing apprenticeships in technology-driven fields. Unlike traditional trade apprenticeships, technology apprenticeships are not as well established and often face unique obstacles, including the lack of standardized training models, difficulty in meeting traditional journeyman-to-apprentice ratios, and high costs associated with recruiting, training, and supporting apprentices.

Senate Bill 431 provides key solutions to these challenges. The bill allows for greater flexibility in journeyman-to-apprentice ratios, ensuring that employers in nonhazardous industries such as cybersecurity and IT can structure apprenticeship programs that align with real-world business needs. By authorizing a process for formal deviation requests from rigid ratio requirements, this legislation will allow employers to provide more apprenticeship opportunities without unnecessary administrative burdens.

The bill also establishes financial incentives that will help employers and apprenticeship sponsors offset the costs associated with running these programs. These incentives will support expenses related to recruitment, education, training, accommodations for disabilities, and materials. By easing financial burdens, more



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businesses will be encouraged to invest in apprenticeship programs, expanding Maryland's workforce development efforts and helping to meet current and existing skilled labor demands.

At Baltimore Cyber Range, we are committed to supporting the expansion of apprenticeship programs and believe this legislation will assist us and others in doing so. We appreciate the legislature's efforts to strengthen Maryland's workforce through apprenticeships and urge a favorable report on SB 431.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Sincerely,
Bruce Spector
Chairman of the Board
Baltimore Cyber Range

SB0431_MACC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Drew Jabin

Position: FAV

Senate Finance Committee

February 19, 2025

SB 431 - Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, supports **SB 431**, which makes critical investments in registered apprenticeships and strengthens Maryland's workforce development pipeline.

Community colleges play a central role in preparing Maryland's workforce, offering accessible, high-quality education that aligns with the needs of local employers. Apprenticeships are a proven model for career readiness, allowing students to gain hands-on experience, earn wages while learning, and enter high-demand industries with minimal student debt. SB 431 expands and enhances apprenticeship opportunities, ensuring more students have access to structured career pathways that lead to good-paying, stable jobs.

A strong apprenticeship system benefits students, businesses, and the broader economy. Many community college students balance coursework with jobs and family responsibilities, and apprenticeships offer them the ability to earn while they learn, reducing financial barriers to higher education. By providing clearer pathways to professional licensure and ensuring that apprenticeship programs remain aligned with industry standards, this bill will allow more Marylanders to complete their training and transition smoothly into full-time employment.

SB 431 also expands apprenticeship opportunities beyond traditional trades, opening doors in emerging and high-growth industries such as healthcare, cybersecurity, and advanced manufacturing. These fields require skilled workers, and community colleges are uniquely positioned to partner with employers to train, upskill, and prepare students for success in these evolving sectors. SB 431 strengthens collaboration by ensuring employers receive the support they need to expand apprenticeship programs, helping Maryland's economy grow and thrive. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** vote on **SB 431**.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.

SB 431_Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a

Uploaded by: Grason Wiggins

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 431

Position: Favorable

Committee: Senate Finance

Date: February 19, 2025

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Senate Bill 431 (SB 431) modernizes the state's apprenticeship system by expanding the definition of a qualifying apprenticeship, ensuring more Marylanders can access career training programs that align with industry needs. **By creating opportunities to increase the allowable apprentice-to-journeyperson ratio in non-hazardous occupations beyond 1:1, SB 431 enhances small business participation in apprenticeship programs, creates economic mobility for Maryland's workers, and expands economic opportunity for all Marylanders.**

Additionally, the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program will provide much-needed support for employers investing in apprenticeship programs. By allowing businesses offset costs related to recruitment, training, and retention, this initiative makes apprenticeships a more viable and scalable solution for closing Maryland's workforce gaps.

Implementation of SB 431 should prioritize employer flexibility, minimal administrative burdens, and broad industry access to apprenticeship programs. The Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development must serve as a business-friendly resource, streamlining participation and clarifying apprentice-to-journeyperson ratio adjustments. A favorable report on SB 431

Expanding access to apprenticeship opportunities is a priority for the Chamber and broader business community, and SB 431 takes a critical step in addressing Maryland's workforce needs. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests **a favorable report on SB 431.**

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Uploaded by: John Fiastro

Position: FAV

SB 431 – Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act
Senate Finance Committee
February 19, 2025
Favorable

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Tasha Cornish, and I serve as the Executive Director of Cybersecurity Association, Inc., an organization dedicated to strengthening Maryland's cybersecurity and IT workforce. I am here to express our strong support for SB 431, the Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act.

Cybersecurity and IT are among the fastest-growing industries in Maryland, yet employers across the state are struggling to find skilled workers to meet demand. Apprenticeships present an effective, scalable solution to this workforce gap, offering hands-on experience and mentorship while creating direct pathways to well-paying, in-demand careers. SB 431 introduces key reforms that will allow Maryland to expand and modernize apprenticeship opportunities, particularly in industries like cybersecurity and IT.

One of the most critical changes in SB 431 is the modernization of journey-person-to-apprentice ratio requirements for nonhazardous occupations. These ratios, originally designed for traditional trades where close supervision is necessary for safety, currently act as a limiting factor in fields like cybersecurity and IT, where such supervision is not required. The bill takes a more flexible and industry-appropriate approach by allowing the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council to adjust ratio requirements for nonhazardous industries. This ensures that employers in the technology sector can train more apprentices at one time, expanding the cybersecurity workforce without compromising training quality.

Another important component of SB 431 is the creation of the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development. By establishing a dedicated office focused on apprenticeship expansion, the state will streamline coordination across agencies, provide centralized resources for employers, and ensure Maryland remains a leader in workforce development. For businesses considering apprenticeship programs, having a single point of contact within the state will reduce administrative barriers and encourage greater participation.

The bill also recognizes the essential role of intermediaries in building and scaling apprenticeship programs, particularly in cybersecurity and IT, where employer engagement and program development require specialized expertise. However, high startup costs often prevent new intermediaries from launching programs or expanding existing efforts. SB 431 addresses this challenge by establishing the Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program, which provides funding to help these organizations develop employer partnerships, create training pipelines, and scale apprenticeship opportunities.

Finally, one of the most significant barriers to apprenticeship adoption is the cost to employers. SB 431 addresses this challenge through the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program Fund, which introduces a pay-per-apprentice funding model. This approach has been highly effective in other states, including California, Iowa, and Pennsylvania, where similar funding mechanisms have driven significant apprenticeship growth. By ensuring predictable, sustained funding, Maryland can give employers the confidence to invest in apprenticeships for the long term, making these programs a viable workforce development strategy rather than a short-term

initiative dependent on temporary grants.

SB 431 is a critical investment in Maryland's workforce and economic future. By modernizing outdated regulations, establishing dedicated state support, strengthening key intermediaries, and creating sustainable funding mechanisms, this bill ensures that Maryland's apprenticeship system can grow to meet industry demand—particularly in high-growth fields like cybersecurity and IT.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to give SB 431 a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.

Tasha Cornish
Executive Director

SB 431 - Registered Apprenticeship Investments for

Uploaded by: Kam Bridges

Position: FAV



Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes

Testimony for Senate Bill 431

Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

TO: Hon. William C. Smith, Jr, Chair, and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Job Opportunities Task Force

DATE: February 19, 2024

POSITION: Support

The Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that develops and advocates policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland. **JOTF supports Senate Bill 431.**

Senate Bill 431 authorizes the State Board of Plumbing to waive the license examination requirement for a journey plumber's license if the individual has completed a plumbing apprenticeship program approved by the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning and allows the Secretary of Labor to waive the examination requirement if the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council finds that the approved program meets industry standards. It also establishes the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development within the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program within the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning for the purpose of marketing and advancing the registered apprenticeship system through the state. Lastly, it creates an annual budget appropriation to fund the office.

Maryland needs increased investment into alternative career development paths other than traditional higher education. The average total cost of attendance for University of Maryland for the 2023-2024 academic year was slightly \$30,000 for Maryland residents. Even with one of the highest median household incomes in the country of roughly \$101,000, the costs of a college degree are simply too heavy a burden for many Marylanders. Apprenticeship programs that lead to family sustaining careers is a crucial component of boosting Maryland workforce productivity and ultimately sustaining the overall health of the economy. Senate Bill 431's investments in both a governmental office and programmatic funding will help ensure that Maryland builds a well-trained, productive workforce that meets the needs of the state's economy.

For these reasons, JOTF supports Senate Bill 431 and urges a favorable report.

For more information, contact:

Kam Bridges / Public Policy Advocate / Kam@jotf.org

SB431_ABCInc_FAV

Uploaded by: Marcus Jackson

Position: FAV



The Voice of Merit Construction

February 19, 2025

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TO: FINANCE COMMITTEE

FROM: ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS

RE: S.B. 431 – REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP INVESTMENTS
FOR A STRONGER ECONOMY (RAISE) ACT

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Associated Builders and Contractors of Maryland support S.B. 431 which is before you today for consideration. This bill offers critical improvements to Maryland's apprenticeship system, promising to strengthen our workforce, boost our economy, and provide valuable career pathways for Marylanders.

The authorization for the State Board of Plumbing and the Secretary of Labor to waive examination requirements for certain licenses for individuals who have completed registered apprenticeship programs is a common-sense approach. It recognizes the rigorous training and demonstrates competency gained through apprenticeships, streamlining the licensure process without compromising standards. This will help get skilled workers into the workforce more quickly, addressing critical labor shortages in various industries.

The establishment of the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development is another vital step. By connecting businesses with skilled talent and individuals with valuable career opportunities, this office will be a catalyst for expanding and strengthening our apprenticeship system. In addition, the increased reporting requirements, including demographic data, will provide valuable insights into the apprenticeship system's effectiveness and help identify areas for improvement.

We believe that the creation of the Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program and the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program, with dedicated funding, will further enhance the apprenticeship system. These programs will provide crucial support to employers and sponsors, encouraging greater participation in apprenticeship programs and helping to offset the costs associated with training new apprentices.

By strengthening our apprenticeship system, we can create a more skilled workforce, attract and retain businesses, and provide pathways to economic opportunity for all Marylanders.

On behalf of the over 1,500 ABC members in Maryland, we respectfully request a favorable report on S.B. 431.

Marcus Jackson, Director of
Government Affairs



SB431 _ MACPA Written Testimony _ FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: MB Halpern

Position: FAV



SB431 - Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act
Senate Finance Committee
February 19, 2025
Legislative Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee,

MACPA is a professional association representing 9,000 Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) and accounting leaders across Maryland. We appreciate the intent of SB431 to expand workforce development through Registered Apprenticeships and recognize the value of apprenticeship programs in developing a skilled workforce.

We also support the creation of the **Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program**, which recognizes the critical role of intermediaries in advancing the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs. The intermediary role is particularly challenging in occupations new to apprenticeships, such as accounting and finance, and we welcome the additional resources, expertise, and oversight this program would provide.

We support efforts to expand access to professional careers through Registered Apprenticeships while maintaining strong licensure standards that uphold public confidence and professional integrity. Ensuring a balanced approach that promotes workforce development while preserving rigorous qualifications is essential to maintaining the high standards of licensed professions.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a **favorable report** on SB431

For more information about this position, please contact Mary Beth Halpern marybeth@macpa.org or Nick Manis nmanis@maniscanning.com.

SB431_RobertLerman_FAV

Uploaded by: Robert Lerman

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of the RAISE Act by Robert Lerman

Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Robert Lerman. I am currently Chair of Apprenticeships for America and have studied apprenticeship issues in the US and abroad for over 30 years, most recently as principal investigator of the evaluation of the American Apprenticeship Initiative. In addition, I served as a consultant to the Maryland Apprenticeship 2030 Commission and am a resident of Maryland.

Before commenting on the RAISE Act, I am happy to celebrate the widening consensus for *why* apprenticeship expansion in Maryland and the US is vital to increasing the opportunities and the productivity of workers, especially young workers. I have made a detailed case for scaling apprenticeships and how to scale apprenticeships in a variety of publications.¹ The Blueprint for Maryland's Future has already embraced the goal that by the 2030-2031 school year, 45% of Maryland high school graduates will have completed the high school component of a registered apprenticeship. The Apprenticeship Commission is proposing an ambitious goal of apprentices becoming 2.3% of the Maryland labor force.

The RAISE Act represents a partial answer into *how* Maryland can scale apprenticeship. I strongly support the RAISE Act as a first step. I also recommend that the committee include a few amendments to the Act. In addition, I believe we require separate legislative and policy measures to meet the 45% goal for Maryland high school graduates.

Here are provisions I fully support.

1. *Waiving examination requirements to obtain plumbing licenses for workers who complete registered apprenticeship programs that meet industry standards and other licensure requirements.* The rationales for the proposal are that the registered apprenticeship programs can provide a sufficient quality control for those working in the plumbing field, that the written test is not necessary for apprenticeship completers who prove their competence by what they do, and that such changes would provide strong incentives for workers and employers to use registered apprenticeship over other training methods. The Act recommends similar approaches for other licensed occupations in Maryland. Registered Apprenticeships themselves are a gold standard for insuring workers learn the competencies to perform occupations at a high level. Licensing too often adds an unnecessary layer.

¹ See my essays "Scaling Apprenticeship to Increase Human Capital." In *Expanding Economic Opportunity for More Americans*. Edited by Melissa S. Kearney and Amy Ganz. The Aspen Institute. February 2019. 56-75. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/1.3-Pgs-56-74-Scaling-Apprenticeship-to-Increase-Human-Capital.pdf> and "Expanding Apprenticeship Opportunities in the United States." In *Policies to Address Poverty in the United States*, edited by Melissa Kearney and Benjamin Harris. Brookings Institution. 2014. https://www.hamiltonproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/expand_apprenticeship_opportunities_united_states_lerman.pdf

2. *Increasing the flexibility of requirements specifying a ratio of journeyperson to apprentices.* For occupations subject to hazards that can be unsafe and cause injury, ratio requirements of at least one expert/mentor/journeyperson for each apprentice may be justified. But many if not most occupations face few if any safety hazards. Moreover, one mentor or supervisor in most professions teach and supervise more than one entry level worker. Having inflexible ratio requirements can deter the creation of apprenticeships, especially when the journeyperson level to employees is low.
3. *Establishing a Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program.* There is strong evidence from the US and other countries that apprenticeship intermediaries—including non-profit and for-profit organizations, unions, industry associations, and units of community colleges—are critical for success in recruiting employers to undertake apprenticeship programs and helping them organize programs. In addition, intermediaries assist employers through the registration process, selecting skill standards (work process schedules) and providers of off-the-job learning (related technical instruction or RTI). Intermediaries can work along with staff at the new Office of Registered Apprenticeship to overcome the most important constraint on expanding apprenticeship, which is generating enough employer offers for the apprenticeship workers seek.
4. *Funding financial assistance to employers to offset start-up costs of apprenticeship programs.* Ideally, Maryland would use a simple process to pay employers or group sponsors for each apprentice that employers hire and retain for 60 days. This program can provide an incentive for employers to start programs and increase the number of apprentices they hire.

The following provisions could be valuable but could be clarified or improved.

5. *Establishing the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development.* This office is to be located with the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) and focus on marketing apprenticeship programs and tracking the results. Since the current MATP is already undertaking some marketing and tracking, I recommend expanding the scope of the new office to include: a) setting annual and long-term goals for apprenticeship expansion; b) collaborating with MATP to expand apprenticeships in state and local government agencies; c) conduct research on the effectiveness of marketing efforts and on the impacts of apprenticeship on earnings. Washington State currently tracks earnings gains of apprenticeship programs alongside the effectiveness of other training strategies.² Such analyses are feasible and can be overseen by the new Maryland office.

Finally, I propose the legislature incorporate an amendment to simplify and speed up the registration process. My work at Urban Institute and with other apprenticeship intermediaries has highlighted that the registration process is often complex and time-consuming in ways that discourage employers from registering programs. At the same time, some states are making great progress in speeding the process. For example, the Kansas Office of Apprenticeship

² <https://wtb.wa.gov/research-resources/workforce-training-results/#open>

approves programs within 14 days. In Alabama and Florida and some other state agency states, the apprenticeship director has authority to register programs without waiting for an apprenticeship council to meet and approve individual programs. Maryland can also speed and improve the registration process by ensuring that the director of MATP exercise the authority to approve individual programs. A second step in improving the registration process, promoting transparency, and increasing the value of apprenticeships is to increase the utilization of occupational skill standards/frameworks for apprenticeship. High quality standards for many apprenticeable occupations are available through the Urban Institute National Apprenticeship Resource Hub, <https://apprenticeships.urban.org/design-program> Maryland could encourage sponsors and employers to use these high quality standards by giving them a fast track to registration.

In conclusion, I support the RAISE Act as a positive step toward the goal of scaling apprenticeships in Maryland and thereby widening the routes to rewarding careers.

SB431_DOL_FAV

Uploaded by: Secretary Portia Wu

Position: FAV

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 431

TO: Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Secretary Portia Wu, Maryland Department of Labor
DATE: 2/19/2025
BILL: Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

Moore-Miller Administration Position: Support

The RAISE Act of 2025 is an essential investment in Registered Apprenticeships (RA) that will support Maryland's economic growth, help businesses to meet their talent needs and enable Maryland residents to find fulfilling, high-demand, family-supporting careers that enable them to thrive.

Registered Apprenticeships are a gold standard of career preparation, blending classroom instruction with hands-on, mentor-guided (or "journey person") training in real-world settings. This model fosters the development of a highly skilled workforce that enhances productivity, improves job site safety, and reduces turnover. With RAs, employers can cultivate talent internally, creating a pipeline of workers ready to meet evolving industry demands.

The Moore-Miller Administration has made growing Registered Apprenticeship a cornerstone of its economic growth and competitiveness strategy. While Maryland has long been a leader in this arena, a strategic shift is needed to accelerate the growth of apprenticeship. The Administration's approach draws upon ideas surfaced in the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission discussions and the views of leading thinkers and stakeholders. It is focused on:

- building upon the outstanding models that have been developed over many decades through labor-management cooperation;
- expanding apprenticeships in new industries – lighthouse sectors such as aerospace and IT, as well as foundational sectors without which the rest of our economy cannot function – teaching, nursing, energy, and infrastructure;
- providing incentives and making it easier for employers and small businesses to join, scale up, or create new apprenticeship programs;
- leveraging state dollars to support apprenticeship programs; and
- providing more connections to apprenticeships from high schools and colleges.

The RAISE Act is the keystone to the success of this strategy. Specifically, the bill would support the growth of Registered Apprenticeship through **five key approaches**:

1. Establishes the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development (“MORAD”) within the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program of the Department of Labor

The Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development (“MORAD”) will coordinate the promotion of Registered Apprenticeships to businesses. More specifically, the Office will be charged with developing, sustaining, and tracking Registered Apprenticeship opportunities and will be empowered to do so by the programs proposed in the sections below. This Office will be located within the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program, staffed by state employees, and will complement the office’s regulatory quality assurance work.

2. Establishes the Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program

Apprenticeship Intermediaries play a critical role in supporting the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs, particularly in non-traditional industries and for small businesses. This legislation will support the development of intermediaries to create self-sustaining apprenticeship infrastructure in new industries by connecting employers, apprentices and potential apprentices, training providers, and the State to provide information to drive quality, innovation, and transparency in Registered Apprenticeship partnerships.

3. Establishes the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program (“MAIP”)

The initial costs for employers to start a Registered Apprenticeship program can be daunting, creating a significant barrier to expanding the number of apprenticeships offered in Maryland. The Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program seeks to address this by offering financial assistance in the form of grants to employers to offset the costs of establishing or scaling a RA program.

4. Creates Opportunity to Expand Journeyman-to-Apprentice Ratios

This section establishes a default, minimum journey person-to-apprentice ratio of 1:1. Establishing Maryland's minimum ratio as 1:1 will protect the essential safety and quality of Registered Apprentices and will allow for exceptions only when prudent.

Second, this section creates an expedited pathway for the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council ("MATC") to consider expanded ratios for certain **nonhazardous** occupations. Under current practice, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors can request a deviation from the 1:1 ratio, but they must wait at least one year from the time that their apprenticeship program becomes registered. This proposal will allow sponsors of programs in nonhazardous occupations to submit requests to MATC at the point of registration rather than waiting a year. This is expected to remove barriers and make RAs more appealing to non-traditional industries, like cybersecurity, while maintaining quality evaluations by MATC, including safety analysis, union sign-off for collectively bargained occupations, and other measures.

5. Repeals the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee

This final section seeks to repeal the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee. The initial purpose of the Committee has been met and there is no longer a need for an advisory group. Future planning related to connecting Maryland's youth to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities is now covered by the Career and Technical Education ("CTE") Committee and the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council.

The original draft of this legislation included a provision to begin a process of requiring automatic licensure by relevant occupational licensing boards upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship, beginning with requiring the State Board of Plumbing to adopt the same automatic licensure provision that the Maryland State Board of Electricians and the Maryland Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Contractors already have. After thorough discussions with stakeholders, however, it was determined that more input is needed to develop this potential approach. Accordingly, this provision has been stricken from the legislation.

The RAISE Act of 2025 is a critical component of Maryland's workforce and economic growth and competitiveness strategy. The Department respectfully requests a favorable report on SB0431.

SB431FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Sheila McDonald

Position: FAV

MARYLAND WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

SB 431

Position: FAVORABLE

February 19, 2025

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Maryland Workforce Alliance, the Statewide organization of labor unions, non-profits, and trade associations, is committed to promoting a world-class workforce in Maryland by bridging skills gaps and addressing critical employment shortages in key fields. We strive to expand registered youth apprenticeship programs, robust high school Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs, and post-high school skills throughout industry.

We urge a FAVORABLE report on SB 431. The Bill is consistent with our mission to promote and support apprenticeships throughout the State.

SB 431 would establish the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development to market and advance the registered apprenticeship system throughout the State. Expanded access to affordable, high quality apprenticeship programs in targeted, highly in-demand fields will provide an influx of young workers with relevant skills into the State economy. Occupations or fields currently lacking enough skilled workers would expand, and new or emerging industries would benefit from a ready pool of trained and experienced workers. Maryland will receive many benefits from an expanded, skilled, and enthusiastic pool of workers who complete apprenticeships and enter the workforce ready to start adding to the State economy.

We applaud the Bill's introduction of automatic licensure for apprentices who complete the multiple years of on-the-job training and hundreds of hours of rigorous classroom instruction. Individuals who have demonstrated proficiency under the guidance of a journeyperson should not have to sit for a written licensing exam, another obstacle that delays the entry of qualified workers into the workforce.

Further, and especially due to the increasing costs of higher education, many individuals will benefit from SB 431 because it would establish the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program which will make grants to employers to reimburse them for costs. Apprentices can enter the workforce faster, confident in their skills and without the financial burden of educational loans.

For these reasons, we support SB 431 and urge a favorable report.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Dewees, Board Chair
Maryland Workforce Alliance

Support for RAISE Act SB 431 AICPA Tom Hood.pdf

Uploaded by: Tom Hood

Position: FAV



The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Madam Chair Pamela Beidle,
Vice-Chair Antonio Hayes,
And members of the Senate Finance Committee

RE: Support for SB 431 - The "RAISE" Act

My name is Tom Hood, CPA, CGMA, and I am a resident of Baltimore City and currently the EVP of Business Growth & Engagement for the AICPA & CIMA, a global membership organization with over 600,000 CPAs, CGMAs, and finance and accounting students as our members. These CPAs and CGMAs work in public practice, private industry, government, non-profit, and education. I was formerly the CEO of the Maryland Association of CPAs for 24 years, and I testified before this body numerous times.

I am here to testify in **support of SB 431**, the Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy ("RAISE") Act, and its intent "to expand and create new career pathways to good, middle-class jobs through high-quality Registered Apprenticeships."

AICPA & CIMA registered such a high-quality apprenticeship for Accounting and Finance nationally and successfully piloted it in Maryland. Our apprenticeship is the first of its kind in accounting and finance, and we strongly agree with the Act's sentiment that "apprenticeships are a gold standard of career preparation"—an invaluable, versatile tool with a proven track record much needed in a profession facing severe talent shortages.

And speaking of gold standards, our efforts around the country make clear that Maryland sets the bar for apprenticeship program administration and support. Upon selecting Maryland as the pilot state for our national program, we were supported by a \$120,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Labor. That funding, in addition to monies from the Sponsor Apprenticeship Incentive Reimbursement ("SAIR") program, incentivized our first 10 employers to leap to learn more about the advantages of utilizing the apprenticeship's "earn-while-you-learn" model and ultimately register apprentices.

In addition, funding under a Maryland Works Grant allowed us to launch a sustainable youth apprenticeship program in Accounting and Finance that continues beyond the grant's life and will serve as a model for the rest of the US. Working with the Maryland Association of CPAs, we used the grant funding to introduce hundreds of Maryland High School students to our new youth apprenticeship, which offers a pathway to a high-demand, family-sustaining career. We registered our first nine employers, with others in the works.

Having experienced firsthand the significant positive impact of financial incentives on employers considering hiring registered apprentices in our program, we fully support the RAISE Act's establishment of the Maryland Apprenticeship Incentive Program ("MAIP"), which would provide grants to employers to cover funding for new Registered Apprentices.

We also strongly support the creation of the Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program, which recognizes the critical role of intermediaries in advancing the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs. The intermediary role is particularly challenging in occupations new to apprenticeships, such as accounting and finance, and we welcome the additional resources, expertise, and oversight this program would provide.

We ask for a favorable report on SB 431 and want to note our appreciation and offer to assist in any way to help grow apprenticeships as a tool to meet the talent demands of the accounting and finance profession.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/Tom Hood/

J. Thomas Hood, CPA, CGMA
EVP Business Engagement & Growth
AICPA-CIMA

CC: Nick Manis, Manis Canning & Associates
Rebekah Brown, CPA, CEO of the Maryland Association of CPA
Joanne Fiore, VP, AICPA & CIMA

SB 431 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Anderson

Position: FWA



PLUMBERS AND STEAMFITTERS

UA LOCAL UNION 486

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Baltimore, Maryland 21236

Phone: 410-866-4380

Fax: 410-933-3515

www.UALocal486.com

Founded 1889

Pasquale D. Petrovia

Business Manager

Gary G. Glab

Financial Secretary/Treasurer

Harry M. Schleicher Jr.

Business Agent

C. Ryan Ambrose

Business Agent

Stephen M. Nitsch

Business Agent

Christopher D. Anderson

Business Agent

Todd E. Eckley

Recruiter

Finance Committee

To: Senator Pam Beidle, Chair; Senator Antonio Hayes, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee

From: Christopher Anderson, Business Agent, Plumbers and Steamfitter Local 486

Support with Amendment SB 431 – Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

On behalf of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486, which represent 2,000+ Plumbers, Steamfitters, Welders, and HVAC Techs across Maryland, I ask you to **SUPPORT SB 431 with Amendment.**

As an organization, we have concerns regarding several aspects of the proposed legislation. At the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486, our apprenticeships are a point of pride. Our members complete a rigorous five-year program, which includes over 1,200 hours of classroom instruction and 10,000 hours of on-the-job training. Our programs throughout the United Association are widely regarded as the gold standard for registered apprenticeship programs across the country. However, being a “registered” program should only be the baseline requirement. Apprentices graduating from the program must possess a deep knowledge of their craft, along with a solid understanding of the plumbing and fuel gas codes, which are integral to their training. The only way to ensure this is through a licensing exam based on the code, as it is already being implemented. We respectfully urge that the exemption for this exam be removed from the legislation.

The importance of maintaining a 1:1 ratio of journeymen to apprentices on job sites cannot be overstated. A journeyman is responsible for ensuring the apprentice completes their tasks safely, thereby protecting the public, the apprentice, and other workers on site. The current ratio is already quite low, and any reduction in this ratio could compromise public safety and the overall quality of work in the industry. Plumbing and gas fitting are complex and increasingly sophisticated trades, incorporating modern tools, materials, and systems. A seasoned journeyman should supervise no more than one apprentice to ensure proper mentoring. This approach has been effective for over a century and should not be arbitrarily

reduced. As we know, improperly installed or maintained plumbing or gas systems can be dangerous and may lead to loss of life or property. The consequences of this ill-considered bill, which has not been adequately evaluated, would directly result in such risks.

Finally, while we support funding for pre-apprenticeship and CTE programs, we are concerned that contractors or intermediaries may exploit the system by continually firing and rehiring apprentices to keep collecting tax incentives. Contractors involved in an apprenticeship program share the cost of training their apprentices with the journeymen who supervise their on-the-job learning. This arrangement ensures that both contractors and workers have a vested interest in properly training the next generation of plumbers.

We urge you to support **SB 431** with the amendment.

Sincerely,

Christopher Anderson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Anderson", written in a cursive style.

SB 431_AFSCME3_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Denise Gilmore

Position: FWA



1410 Bush Street (Suite A)
Baltimore, MD 21230
Phone: 410-547-1515
Email: info@afscmemd.org

Patrick Moran – President

**SB 431 – Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy
(RAISE) Act
Finance Committee
February 19, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

AFSCME Council 3 represents 45,000 state, county, and municipal employees. When done properly, apprenticeships are meaningful job development programs that help employees go from apprentices to well-trained, permanent career employees. We appreciate the administration's willingness to address our concerns. We are working with our sisters and brothers at the MD/DC AFL-CIO to provide a comprehensive list of amendments that will ensure that we are maintaining the integrity of our registered apprenticeship programs in the state.

We urge the committee provide a favorable report with the AFL-CIO's amendments.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB 431 - Registered Apprenticeship Investments for

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FWA



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Balto. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

SB 431 - Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act Senate Finance Committee February 19, 2025

SUPPORT with AMENDMENTS

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 431 if amended. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

A strong workforce relies on highly skilled workers, and unions have long been at the forefront of building and sustaining robust Registered Apprenticeship programs. The labor movement has played a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of apprenticeships, setting high industry standards, and protecting workers' rights to quality training and fair wages. Labor's programs have consistently proven to be an effective way for individuals to gain hands-on experience and technical education, ensuring they develop the necessary expertise needed for their careers while providing employers with a competent and capable workforce. Apprenticeship training emphasizes systematic instruction and experience, allowing new workers to develop their knowledge in all aspects of a skilled occupation as they enter an industry.

Sectors such as building and construction, precision machining, aerospace, woodworking, manufacturing, transportation, and healthcare require a diverse range of specialized knowledge, technical expertise, and mechanical skills to meet industry needs. Our labor movement has world-class apprenticeship programs in all these sectors and expects Maryland to maintain the integrity of apprenticeship programs to provide paid workforce training resulting in successful outcomes for the apprentice to enter a high-road middle class career.

As our state continues to grapple with a severe workforce and skills shortage, it is essential that we maintain strong apprenticeship programs that develop workers with the ability to learn, adapt quickly and have a desire to obtain the highest level of technical aptitude. While we recognize

and appreciate the state's commitment to invest in expanding apprenticeships, SB 431 undermines the core mission and purpose of these programs—prioritizing the development and success of workers who play a crucial role in our state's economic future.

To address this, we propose the following amendments:

On pages 2-3, **strike sections 12.305.3 and 2-104.1 (page 2, lines 32-36, page 3, lines 1-19)**

We believe that the list of nonhazardous occupations, as presented by the Department of Labor is unreliable and poses public safety concerns, therefore, we submit this amendment:

On pages 3-4, **strike lines pertaining to required minimum ratios (page 3, lines 31-32, page 4, lines 1-7)**

On page 4, lines 26-29, replace with:

“On or before [June 30 of] DECEMBER 31 each year, the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning shall submit an annual report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, with the following information for the immediately preceding year for five years”

On page 4, under (d)(1)(ii), add:

“(iii) the post apprenticeship wage rates, job placement, retention, and advancement data for each registered apprenticeship program in the State”

On page 5, under (IV) add,

“(V) ANY CORRECTIVE ACTIONS, INCLUDING THE REQUIRING OF REIMBURSEMENT OF INCENTIVES FOR FAILURE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP INCENTIVE PROGRAM”

On page 7, **strike lines 1-11**

On page 7, line 19, replace “an” with:

“A MARYLAND-BASED”

On page 7, lines 21-22, after “OR” add:

“POTENTIAL”

On page 8, after (c)(1)(IV), add:

“(V) INCLUDE A PROCESS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE PROGRAM”

On page 8, after (c)(1)(V), add:

“(VI) EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31, 2030, UNLESS REAUTHORIZED BY FURTHER LEGISLATION”

On page 9, under (7), add:

“(i) A SPONSOR MAY NOT SERVE AS A QUALIFIED INTERMEDIARY AS DEFINED IN 11-410-04”

On page 11, lines 5-8 should read:

“AN EMPLOYER OR SPONSOR AWARDED A GRANT UNDER THE PROGRAM SHALL ATTEST TO ITS INTENT TO RETAIN THE APPRENTICE FOR THE FULL DURATION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AND PROVIDE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE RETENTION OF THE APPRENTICE.”

Support Amendment SB 431 – Registered Apprenticesh

Uploaded by: Jason Ascher

Position: FWA

Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

Executive Board

Chris Madello
Steamfitter Local 602
Washington D.C. Metro
President

Kris Begolly
Plumbers & Pipefitter Local 110
Norfolk, VA
Vice President

Scott Upole
Plumbers & Steamfitter Local 489
Cumberland, MD
Secretary-Treasurer

Terriea "T" Smalls
Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5
Washington D.C. Metro

Nate Davenport
Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 10
Richmond/Roanoke

Pasquale Petrovia
Plumbers & Steamfitter Local 486
Baltimore

Robert Cooper
Sprinkler Fitter Local 669
Maryland, DC, Virginia

Finance Committee

To: Senator Pam Beidle, Chair; Senator Antonio Hayes, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee
From: Jason Ascher, Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

Support with Amendment SB 431 – Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our five United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Locals, which represent 10,000+ Plumbers, Steamfitters, Welders, HVAC Techs, and Sprinkler Fitters across Maryland, I ask you to **SUPPORT SB 431 with Amendment.**

As an organization, we have concerns about several aspects of the legislation.

Our apprenticeships are our pride and joy at the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters. Our members complete a five-year program, receiving over 1,200 hours in the classroom and 10,000 hours of on-the-job training. Our programs are recognized as the gold standard for registered apprenticeship programs nationwide. However, simply being a "registered" program should be the minimum requirement. An apprentice graduating from a program must possess the necessary knowledge of their craft and a thorough understanding of the plumbing and fuel gas code, which is a crucial part of their training. The only way to achieve this is through a licensing exam on the code, as is currently being implemented. We respectfully ask that the exemption for the exam be removed from this legislation.

Maintaining a 1:1 ratio of journeymen to apprentices on the job site is essential, as the journeyman ensures the apprentice completes their work safely, protecting the public, the apprentice, and other workers on site. This ratio is already low, and reducing it could pose a public safety risk, as both public safety and the quality of work in this industry would be severely compromised. Plumbing and gas fitting involve highly complex tasks in a trade that is becoming increasingly sophisticated by integrating modern tools, materials, and systems. A seasoned journeyman should supervise and monitor only one apprentice while carrying out their duties. This mentoring approach has been effective for over 100 years in this trade and should not be arbitrarily diminished. As noted, improperly installed or maintained plumbing or gas fitting systems can be extremely dangerous, potentially leading to loss of life and property. These serious consequences will directly result from this poorly conceived bill that has not been adequately considered.

Finally, while we fully support funding for pre-apprenticeship and CTE programs, a successful model for comprehensive apprenticeship programs has existed for over a century. Our concern is that contractors or intermediaries may exploit the system by continually firing and replacing apprentices to keep receiving tax incentives. Contractors participating in a specific apprenticeship program share the cost of training their apprentices with the journeymen who will help train them on the job. This setup gives both contractors and workers a vested interest in training the next generation of plumbers.

We urge you to support **SB 431** with the amendment.

Sincerely,

Jason Ascher
Political Director
Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

**7050 Oakland Mills Road, Suite 180
Columbia, MD 21046**



SB431_LOS with Amendments_Registered Apprenticeshi

Uploaded by: Kevin O'Keeffe

Position: FWA

February 19, 2025

To: Members of the Senate Finance Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: **Support Senate Bill (SB) 431 with Amendments -
Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act**

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 approximately 1,000 registered apprentices in the electrical trade including low voltage apprentices.

IEC Chesapeake supports Governor Moore's efforts to strengthen apprenticeships in Maryland. The construction industry is the number one industry that utilizes apprenticeships and IEC Chesapeake offers the following amendments to Senate Bill 431 which IEC believes would strengthen the apprenticeship program for the construction industry.

Amendment 1

On Page 3, Lines 7-19, clarify the bill language to ensure future licenses such as a low voltage license are included.

Amendment 2

On Page 4, Lines 3-5, IEC Chesapeake suggests that hazardous occupations in Maryland be eligible for an apprentice/journey worker ratio change since the U.S. Department of Labor currently allows a ratio change for hazardous occupations.

Amendment 3

On Pages 5-6, IEC Chesapeake supports the establishment of a Subcommittee under the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC) to address Youth Apprenticeships.

Amendment 4

On Page 10, Lines 27-29 and on Page 11, Lines 1-2, IEC Chesapeake supports a reduction in the number of months of employment from seven to three months. (Explanation: IEC Chesapeake recommends a 90- day period so that it better aligns with the realities of hiring apprentices in the construction industry. With a seven month eligibility period, companies would delay hiring until January or until the fall of the following year to enroll students into the programs because most hiring of apprentices in the construction industry occurs in the summer. Another option would be to consider the number of hours worked rather than months.)

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.

SB431_Hamilton-Ryker_FWA

Uploaded by: Mary Ann Lisanti

Position: FWA



February 18, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Support for SB431 RAISE ACT– With Clarifying Amendment

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee;

I am writing to express my strong support for SB431, which seeks to enhance and expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in Maryland. As the Chief Operating Officer of Hamilton-Ryker, I have seen firsthand the transformative impact of apprenticeship programs on workforce development.

Through our workforce development division, TalentGro, we serve as a federal and state sponsor and intermediary for RAPs, supporting over 800 unique employer locations nationwide and managing over 7,700 healthcare apprentices. We are deeply committed to increasing access to high-quality apprenticeship opportunities, particularly for underrepresented populations and our military community. Currently, we manage nearly 500 apprentices in Maryland, which is growing steadily every day; however, funding instability stalls our efforts.

SB431 represents a critical step in strengthening and solidifying Maryland's apprenticeship system. However, I encourage the Committee to clarify that **qualified intermediaries** with proven expertise in apprenticeship program management can also serve as program sponsors. We have the proven track record and expertise to scale these programs to your desired numbers. Additionally, **reimbursable costs for qualified intermediaries** should explicitly include expenses related to program development, management, and compliance with the regulations governing RAPs. These provisions will ensure that experienced intermediaries can continue providing high-quality apprenticeship opportunities while meeting the rigorous standards for program success.

I appreciate your leadership in advancing this critical legislation and welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource as the bill progresses. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide further insights or assistance.

Sincerely,

Shari Franey
Chief Operating Officer

Cc: Ruth Patterson; TalentGro Director
Mary Ann Lisanti, Consultant

SB 431 Ray Baker Baltimore DC Building Trades (FAV

Uploaded by: Ray Baker

Position: FWA



February 19, 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 431: Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act
Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Thank you Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony on SB 431. 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 431 with amendments. We met last week with staff from the Governor's office and the Maryland Department of Labor. The BDCBT shared its concerns about the bill as introduced and the amendments that are important to us.

- 1. The bill eliminates the licensing exam for individuals who successfully complete a registered plumbing apprenticeship program. We urged that this be removed from the bill: p2, lines 32-36 and p3, lines 1-19.**
 - The exam is critical to consumer protection and public safety. Passing the exam demonstrates that a plumber has reached a recognized level of competency. The exam tests plumbers' knowledge of plumbing codes, practices, and safety procedures, ensuring they are qualified to perform various plumbing tasks. By ensuring competency through the exam, the license protects consumers by guaranteeing plumbers meet minimum standards. According to Maryland Code of Regulations, Sec. 09.20.02.03, Examination for Journey Plumber Certificates, the passing grade of 70 is necessary to pass the exam.
 - This exam acts as an important consumer protection filter: according to the August 15, 2024 minutes of the Maryland State Board of Plumbing, most recent data available on the Maryland Department of Labor website, between January 2024 and August 15 2024, "400 plumbing candidates were tested, 157 candidates passed, 243 failed for a pass rate of 39%. Since the inception of the test, 11,575 candidates were tested, 4,197 candidates passed, 7,378 failed, for a pass rate of 36%."
- 2. The bill authorizes a deviation from one-to-one journey worker to apprentice ratio for occupations designated by the Maryland Secretary of Labor as "nonhazardous to workers and members of the public." The bill also permits DOL to "consider formal written deviation requests from all other occupations" seeking a journey worker to apprentice ratio other than the required one to one ratio. We urged that these be removed from the bill: p3 lines 31-32 and p4 lines 1-7.**
 - This is a slippery slope and opens the door for diluting the skilled trades that comprise the construction industry and increasing the potential for construction workplace safety hazards. The key distinction between an apprentice and a journeyman lies in their levels of expertise and responsibilities. Apprentices are entry-level individuals undergoing a formal training program to learn a skilled trade. They work under the supervision of a

seasoned professional, gaining hands-on experience and theoretical knowledge. Apprenticeships are structured and serve as a pathway to mastery in a specific trade. Journey workers have completed their apprenticeships, attaining a higher level of proficiency and qualification. Journey workers possess the skills and knowledge necessary to work independently in their trade. The journey worker stage represents a significant milestone in a construction professional's career, signifying a higher level of competency and autonomy.

- The bill does not define what is considered nonhazardous, nor does the bill provide any guidance to determine whether a particular occupation is hazardous or nonhazardous. The BDCBT is concerned about leaving such a wide latitude of discretion to the Secretary of Labor. The BDCBT is aware of the Maryland Department of Labor Memo "SB511/Ch.307, 2024 HB 650/Ch. 308, 2024 - Final report on analyzing the apprenticeship mentoring ratios for all nontraditional apprenticeable occupations in the State," sent to Senate President Ferguson and House Speaker Jones. The list memo provides a list of 135 "nontraditional" occupations that could operate with a mentorship higher than one-to-one without posing a risk to the safety of workers in the workplace. It is unclear whether MDOL anticipates relying on this list. Further, the list includes occupation categories no longer in use, such as refrigeration mechanic, and occupations that could be dangerous to the public, such as emergency medical technician/paramedic.

3. **The bill creates "qualified intermediaries" as part of the Registered Apprenticeship Incentive Program. We believe this program could benefit from additional considerations, outlined below:**

- Strengthen the reporting to the General Assembly: On p5, after line 10, the following should be added: (V) any corrective actions, including the requiring of reimbursement of incentives, for failure to meet the requirements of the Registered Apprenticeship Incentive Program.
- Require "qualified intermediaries" to be "Maryland-based" entities on p7 line 19 to support local based businesses and not out-of-state businesses.
- Prohibit "qualified intermediaries" from also being sponsors to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Determine whether a new "Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development" is necessary to support the new program, or whether existing staff is sufficient.

The BDCBT urges a favorable report with amendments on SB 431.

Ray Baker
Maryland Director, BDCBT
RBaker@BDCBT.org
410.585.7862

M&A_MCAMW_testimony_HB501 SB431_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: FWA



The Honorable Pam Beidle,
Chair Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St
Annapolis MD 21401

The Honorable C.T. Wilison
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Support for HB 501 and SB 431 w/ Amendments

Dear Chair Beidle and Wilson, and honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee,

On behalf of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Metropolitan Washington (MCAMW), I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on HB501 / SB431, legislation that aims to enhance the state's registered apprenticeship system.

MCAMW proudly represents 200 construction contractors, approximately 10,000 workers, and 1,500 apprentices. Our organization contributes significantly to the region's economy, generating nearly \$2 billion in annual revenue and approximately \$500 million in state, federal, and local taxes each year.

We recognize the bill's potential to strengthen workforce development in Maryland, and we support the legislation with amendments to ensure its implementation effectively meets industry and worker needs. The following amendments are suggested to strengthen the bill, and safeguard sectors of our industry:

1. Expanding Data Collection in 11-405

Subsection (d)(1) outlines reporting requirements for apprenticeship programs, which we strongly support. However, we recommend expanding data collection and reporting requirements to include:



- Post-apprenticeship worker outcomes for at least five years, including:
 - Wage progression,
 - Job placement rates,
 - Retention statistics, and
 - Career advancement data.

This expansion would provide a more comprehensive assessment of apprenticeship program effectiveness and help Maryland refine its workforce development strategies.

2. Avoiding Redundant Bureaucracy in 11-409 – Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development (MORAD)

HB 501 / SB 431 establishes the Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development (MORAD) within the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP). While we support initiatives that enhance Maryland's apprenticeship system, we do not see the necessity for a new, separate office.

Instead, we recommend expanding staff and resources within the existing MATP structure to accomplish MORAD's stated mission without adding an additional administrative layer. This approach will ensure efficiency while still advancing the state's registered apprenticeship system.

3. Addressing Concerns with the Intermediary Program in 11-410

The bill proposes creating a Registered Apprenticeship Qualified Intermediary Program, which adds a separate administrative layer that may be unnecessary. Current federal regulations already permit industry intermediaries and apprenticeship facilitators, raising questions about the need for this new program.

Should this provision remain in the bill, we recommend the following amendments:

- Clarify the definition of Qualified Intermediary to specify eligibility criteria and indicate whether out-of-state entities may qualify.
- In Subsection (4)(I), replace "Apprenticeship Program Participants" with "Potential Apprentices" to reflect the program's intended role in outreach and recruitment.



- Define whether intermediaries may serve as registered apprenticeship sponsors and clarify their inclusion or exclusion under Section 11-607.

These amendments would provide transparency and ensure that any new intermediary programs operate effectively within Maryland's workforce system.

4. Strengthening the Apprenticeship Incentive Program in 11-607

HB 501 / SB 431 establishes an Apprenticeship Incentive Program, which we support in principle. However, the bill currently limits incentive eligibility to "newly registered apprentices", creating confusion between incentives for launching new programs and incentives for hiring apprentices.

To ensure that incentives support sustained employment rather than short-term enrollment, we recommend:

- Strengthening (F)(4) to require firms to commit to retaining apprentices through the full apprenticeship period and beyond, unless the apprentice voluntarily leaves or is dismissed for cause.
- Ensuring that incentives prioritize both program creation and long-term employment outcomes, aligning funding with workforce retention goals.

5. Removing Unnecessary Plumbers Licensing Provisions in 12-305

The plumbers licensing provisions in HB 501 / SB 431 pose significant safety risks by reducing examination requirements in a profession where high heat, high pressure, and hazardous gases are routinely encountered. Plumbers work with pressurized water and gas lines, where improper installation can lead to explosions, leaks, and structural failures. Exposure to natural gas, sewer gases, and carbon monoxide without proper training increases the risk of poisoning and fire hazards. Additionally, plumbers often use high-heat equipment such as torches and soldering tools, requiring technical expertise to prevent fires and burns. Removing rigorous licensing requirements undermines public health and safety, making it essential to maintain current standards.



In conclusion, we support HB501 / SB341 with the aforementioned amendments, as an important step in expanding apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland. However, our suggested refinements are necessary to avoid redundancy, strengthen workforce accountability, and ensure effective use of resources. We urge the committee to consider the recommended amendments outlined above to enhance the bill's impact while minimizing unnecessary administrative expansion.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to working together to refine and implement effective apprenticeship policies that benefit Maryland's workforce and industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Bello", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas L. Bello
Executive Vice President
Mechanical Contractors Association of Metropolitan Washington

SB 431 RAISE Act Support with ammendments 2025.pd

Uploaded by: Tom Clark

Position: FWA



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

JOSEPH F. DABBS: Business Manager • THOMAS C. MYERS: President • RICHARD D. WILKINSON: Vice President
CHRISTOPHER M. CASH: Financial Secretary • RICHARD G. MURPHY: Recording Secretary • WILLIAM T. NG: Treasurer



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH AMMENDMENTS -RAISE ACT SB 431 REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP INVESTMENTS - STRONGER ECONOMY February 19, 2025

TO: Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, Members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Tom Clark, Political Director, Int. Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 26

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, I ask that you consider voting **in favor with amendments for SB 431**. I also ask you to consider the youth of Maryland when you discuss this or any apprenticeship program. At first glance this bill talks about the state and businesses , but falls short of addressing what this does for the young people of the state. I hope by adding the amendments below, this will take care of the omission of the youth of the Free State. Please remember that an “apprenticeship” is a three-legged stool: On the job training, classroom work and some sort of job placement. Without these pillars, we are exploiting young employees seeking to learn a trade or skill.

Please consider the following amendments:

We strongly support maintaining the examination for Journey Plumber license to ensure that individuals fully understand the codes and requirements of their work.

On pages 2-3, **strike sections 12.305.3 and 2-104.1 (page 2, lines 32-36, page 3, lines 1-19)**

On pages 3-4, **strike lines pertaining to requirement minimum ratios (page 3, lines 31-32, page 4, lines 1-7)**

On page 4, lines 26-29, replace with:

“On or before [June 30 of] DECEMBER 31 each year, the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning shall **submit an annual report** to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, with the following information **for the immediately preceding year for five years**”





International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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On page 4, under (d)(1)(ii), add:

“(iii) the post apprenticeship wage rates, job placement, retention, and advancement data for each registered apprenticeship program in the State”

On page 5, under (IV) add,

“(V) ANY CORRECTIVE ACTIONS, INCLUDING THE REQUIRING OF REIMBURSEMENT OF INCENTIVES FOR FAILURE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP INTERMEDIARY PROGRAM”

On page 7, **strike lines 1-11**

On page 7, line 19, replace “an” with:

“A MARYLAND-BASED”

On page 7, lines 21-22, after “OR” add:

“POTENTIAL”

On page 8, after (c)(1)(IV), add:

“(V) INCLUDE A PROCESS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE PROGRAM”

On page 8, after (c)(1)(V), add:





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“(VI) EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31, 2030, UNLESS REAUTHORIZED BY FURTHER LEGISLATION”

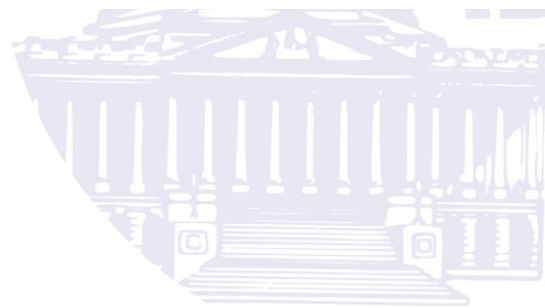
On page 9, under (7), add:

“(i) A SPONSOR MAY NOT SERVE AS A QUALIFIED INTERMEDIARY AS DEFINED IN 11-410-04”

On page 11, lines 5-8 should read:

“AN EMPLOYER OR SPONSOR AWARDED A GRANT UNDER THE PROGRAM SHALL ATTEST TO ITS INTENT TO RETAIN THE APPRENTICE FOR THE FULL DURATION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AND PROVIDE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE RETENTION OF THE APPRENTICE.”

Thank you.



Chartered 1892
Washington, D.C.



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Position: UNF

PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS APPRENTICESHIP

WASHINGTON, D.C., JOINT PLUMBING APPRENTICE COMMITTEE

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Washington, D.C.

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Trade professionals have reviewed HB501 and SB431 and have the following comments and concerns:

- **Licensing and Testing:** There is a strong interest in skilled trade apprenticeships in Maryland, especially for licensed journeyman plumbers and gasfitters. The interest is not tied only to the work but also to the benefits and wages that can and should come from a career in skilled construction trades. The Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5 training facility takes one apprentice for every 10 applicants. However, removing the current testing requirement for journey licensing will not solve the problem of putting more qualified plumbers and gasfitters to work. The licensing test does not ONLY assess basic plumbing knowledge, but evaluates the license applicant's ability to navigate and understand necessarily complex plumbing and fuel gas codes. No amount of field experience replaces such an assessment. A journey-level license allows a plumber/gasfitter to work alone on the most complicated and dangerous plumbing and fuel gas systems. Lowering the "standard of care" to only recognize an apprentice's time in the class and on the jobsite is unwise and unsafe. The testing must remain to ensure that a licensed journey plumber in Maryland can use a current code book and be able to comprehend the regular changes that appear in new code every few years.

- **Plumber/Gasfitter to Apprentice Ratio:** The current standard of one to one (1:1) which could already be considered insufficient, is a threshold which must not be crossed. Classroom training makes up an important, but smaller portion of training time for skilled trade apprentices. The passing on of best practices and jobsite relevant industry knowledge from journeyman to apprentice plumber makes up the bulk of any apprentices training, in sheer hours. Teaching is not constant, but "as time allows" on any jobsite. Each journeyworker has a level of training responsibility to their apprentice. Even now, apprentices are not receiving well-rounded field training. Many companies are promoting the use of "piece workers" who are "installers" of a single piping system or plumbing aspect (e.g. DWV sanitary, water supply piping, groundwork, stormwater, or setting fixtures only). This lack of well-rounded field experience, coupled with a low or mid-level apprenticeship is not producing a qualified Journeyman, who can perform all facets of our trade independently and safely. Plumbing is complex and nuanced. There are multiple systems and a cornucopia of materials and methods for every system. The on-the-job (OTJ) training time for each apprentice is already taxed, with the rapid pace of construction, whether residential, commercial, or industrial. If a **skilled** labor shortage is the crisis our state is facing, then cutting face-to-face OTJ training time cannot be a reasonable answer.

- **Funding and Grants:** A model exists for the funding of training apprentices which requires no contribution from the state. While funding schools for pre-apprenticeships is

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encouraged and welcome, there are pipe-trades and plumbing apprenticeships which
fully funded and sustained by their members and contractors. It has been shown for
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nearly 100 years that contractors can easily share the cost of building qualified apprentices with the journeyman plumbers and apprentices they hire. That cooperation has funded the most technologically advanced apprentice training centers in the state and beyond, even setting a regional standard for training excellence outside of Maryland. There is no need to fund apprenticeship training beyond supporting the efforts of K-12 public school pre-apprenticeships and county CTE programs. Those are the programs which create interest in construction trades apprenticeships. Those schools, and quality, longstanding plumbing apprenticeships are where Maryland grows the top future journeyman plumbers. It is worth noting that those existing, strong apprenticeships have no issues with graduating licensed plumbers who pass their licensing exams the first, or on rare occasion, the second time.

- Further Notes:
 - The proposed legislation falls short of recognizing that backflow training is also a requirement under State law and also does not align with current requirements for license examinations.
 - The proposed legislation establishes an uneven playing field that punishes an apprentice in any upper tier apprenticeship program and rewards an apprentice from a less stringent program (as in a pieceworker mentioned above). An upper tier, 5-year program does not graduate an apprentice until said apprentice completes 1250+ hours of formal classroom training and has earned their Journey-level Plumbing/Gasfitting licenses through examination. Under the proposed bill other apprentices in a program that only offers 250-400 hours of formal training may earn a license (without examination) and with only three to four years of trade experience. This creates a lack of incentive to create skilled plumbers and rewards anyone who builds under-skilled installers.
 - The bill as written waters down significantly the importance of knowledge, safety, and installation quality, affecting the end product consumers will receive and compromising the safety both Plumbers/Gasfitters, and the plumbing end-users.
- For Closing Consideration: A licensing protocol for lawyers or doctors that follow the model of this legislation:
Where the current model uses extensive post graduate education, followed by the Medical or Law Boards Examinations versus, a theoretical program that would only feature 25-33% of the typical post graduate education and not require a Medical or Law Board Examination for one to become board-licensed in either field.

Which professional would you prefer to have treating or representing you?

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Position: UNF

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