

March 4, 2025

To: Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee
Members of the Economic Matters Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: Oppose House Bill (HB) 957 - State Procurement - Worker Residency Requirements

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents approximately 200 electrical contractors who employ approximately 15,000 workers in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, IEC Chesapeake has nearly 1,000 electrical apprentices. IEC Chesapeake appreciates the sponsor's intent to provide more jobs on Maryland publicly-funded construction projects by requiring that a certain percentage of workers are Maryland residents. IEC Chesapeake respectfully opposes HB957 as drafted because it poses a potential challenge to employers to meet the Maryland resident standard.

Getting skilled labor is challenging today. The state of Maryland should not be creating more obstacles to hiring willing and available skilled labor. Maryland borders on four states and the District of Columbia. Given the ease of moving between our neighboring jurisdictions, contractors often perform projects in more than one jurisdiction. Many apprentices and employees live outside of Maryland when working on Maryland publicly funded projects.

The requirements in HB957 could often be met but at times they may not be met. In addition, workers and apprentices who live in Maryland could leave the project for a variety of reasons and be replaced by non-Maryland residents. The eligible apprentice for a company may not live in Maryland when they begin work on a project. IEC Chesapeake also believes that the penalty of debarment for a period not to exceed 5 years if there have been two violations of Title 17, Subtitle 6B of the State Finance and Procurement Article within ten years is excessive.

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.