



PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION NO. 5

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING INDUSTRY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO



TESTIMONY OF JULIUS WRIGHT, UA PLUMBERS & GASFITTERS LOCAL 5

IN SUPPORT OF THE MARYLAND APPRENTICESHIP AND PREVAILING WAGE TRANSPARENCY ACT (SB3 / HB850)

FAVORABLE

Dear Chairs Pena-Melnyk and Beidle, and Members of the House Government Operations Committee and Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Maryland Apprenticeship and Prevailing Wage Transparency Act. My name is Julius Wright, and I represent UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5, which has trained and employed skilled tradespeople in the Washington, D.C. area since 1890. With over 1,800 highly trained professionals, including 300 apprentices, Local 5 upholds industry excellence and safety.

This legislation strengthens Maryland's labor standards, ensures responsible use of taxpayer dollars, and combats wage theft and worker misclassification. By establishing databases to monitor prevailing wage compliance and apprenticeship programs, Maryland follows successful models from states like Nevada and New York.

Preventing Fraud and Protecting Workers: Wage theft and misclassification deny workers fair wages and benefits while allowing bad actors to evade tax obligations. Transparency in prevailing wage compliance, as seen in New York, reduces fraud and ensures fair competition among contractors.

Building a Stronger Workforce: Maryland's union apprenticeship programs set the industry standard. A statewide apprenticeship database will enhance accountability, track program success, and strengthen workforce development. Nevada has shown that such oversight increases program completion rates and economic growth.

A Sound Economic Investment: Recovering lost tax revenue from wage theft and misclassification allows Maryland to reinvest in infrastructure and essential services. Ensuring fair competition benefits responsible contractors and the state economy.

Conclusion: The Maryland Apprenticeship and Prevailing Wage Transparency Act is a smart investment that strengthens our workforce, protects taxpayers, and ensures fair labor practices. I urge your support to improve oversight, workforce development, and economic integrity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julius Wright

UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5