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HB 864 – Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

April 2, 2026

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 864. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

HB 864 establishes a minimum threshold on public works construction projects, requiring that at least 20% of labor hours be completed by registered apprentices. This legislation invests in our state's workforce development, while reinforcing the importance of apprenticeship opportunities and participation.

Apprenticeship utilization policies are not new. States such as Washington, Nevada, and Utah have implemented similar policies to mandate apprenticeship utilization, as they have recognized that apprentices play a crucial role in building out infrastructure through these projects.

As our state looks to commit itself to significantly expanding apprenticeships, SB 688 takes necessary steps to ensure that our own public works projects support that growth.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 864.



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HB864_MD Labor_Crossover Hearing_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna Bachman

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 864

TO: Budget and Taxation Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)
DATE: April 2, 2026
BILL: Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act

MD LABOR POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

HB864 would create an “applicable percentage” of work hours for covered procurements that must be completed by Registered Apprentices. The bill would also establish the definition of a “qualified apprenticeship-connected program” to only include programs that referred to Registered Apprenticeships with a completion rate of 25%.

The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) within MD Labor, operating as Maryland’s State Apprenticeship Agency, oversees Registered Apprenticeship within the State. MD Labor has been working diligently with the bill sponsor to ensure that Maryland can effectively utilize procurement to strengthen Registered Apprenticeship in our State. The Department appreciates the sponsor’s continued partnership and leadership on this issue.

MD Labor is in support of HB864 with amendments, outlined below.

Specifically, MD Labor requests that the following amendments be added to HB864 to:

1. Define a “journeyworker” as someone who has either completed a Registered Apprenticeship in a craft or someone who has performed the skilled labor for the length of the Registered Apprenticeship, which will allow programs flexibility in assigning journeyworkers to apprentices;
2. Expand the definition of “qualified apprenticeship program” to include apprenticeship training programs and other workforce development programs, in addition to pre-apprenticeship programs;
3. Ensure that funds from the State Apprenticeship and Training Fund can be used for apprenticeship training programs, in addition to pre-apprenticeship programs, as is current law and practice; and
4. Apply provisions of the bill to “qualified apprenticeship programs,” as defined in HB864.

MD Labor appreciates this legislation’s intent to improve the strength of Registered Apprenticeship programs and respectfully asks the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB864 **with** the referenced amendments.

For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti at Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov.