

SB 143.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
*Jeffrey Swilley, Interim 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)
Ellen LaFrankie, Executive Director

Western Maryland

Western Maryland Consortium
(Allegany, Garrett &
Washington Counties)
Stacey Ferrare, Executive Director

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

The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support for SB0143 – Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Dear Chairs Beidle and Guzzone, and Members of the Committees:

On behalf of the Maryland Workforce Association, I write in strong support of Senate Bill 143 (SB0143), known as the Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act.

This legislation updates Maryland's public works contracting law to reinforce the use of qualified apprentices and journeyworkers. It expands the types of projects subject to apprenticeship requirements and clarifies that contractors and subcontractors must employ a defined percentage of apprentices and journeyworkers on covered public works projects. It also eliminates outdated provisions that permitted payments to apprenticeship programs in lieu of hiring apprentices.

Why MWA Supports SB0143

- (1) Strengthens Workforce Pathways - SB0143 aligns state procurement policy with workforce development goals by ensuring that public investments directly support on-the-job training for Maryland workers.
- (2) Enhances Equity and Access - By requiring meaningful apprenticeship utilization on public works projects, the bill expands access to quality career opportunities in construction and related trades, especially for historically underrepresented populations.
- (3) Supports Local Workforce Systems - Local workforce boards and MWA members work daily to connect employers, education providers, and jobseekers. SB0143 reinforces that work by creating predictable demand for apprenticeship placements tied to public contracting.

For these reasons, MWA respectfully requests a favorable report on SB0143 from the Senate Finance Committee. This bill represents a practical, workforce-driven approach to public contracting that benefits businesses, workers, and communities across Maryland. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kirkland Murray, President
Maryland Workforce Association

SB143 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Anderson

Position: FAV

PLUMBERS AND STEAMFITTERS

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Christopher D. Anderson Jr.

Business Agent

Todd E. Eckley

Recruiter

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 143

Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

SUBMITTED BY: CHRIS ANDERSON

BUSINESS AGENT, PLUMBERS AND STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 486

Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Chris Anderson, Business Agent of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486. On behalf of the members of Local 486, we respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 143.

Senate Bill 143 represents a forward-thinking investment in Maryland's workforce, economy, and public infrastructure. By requiring contractors and subcontractors on public works projects to meet a defined percentage of labor hours performed by qualified apprentices or journey workers, this legislation ensures that taxpayer-funded projects help build the next generation of skilled workers.

Beginning January 1, 2027, the bill establishes a 20% apprenticeship labor hour requirement, with the Secretary of Labor empowered to set the applicable percentage annually. This phased and administratively guided approach provides predictability for contractors while steadily strengthening Maryland's skilled labor pipeline.

Rather than allowing contractors to simply make financial contributions to apprenticeship programs in lieu of employing apprentices, the bill prioritizes direct, hands-on workforce development. Real training occurs on real job sites. This legislation ensures that public investments translate into meaningful career pathways for Maryland residents.

Senate Bill 143 establishes clear definitions, measurable standards, and practical reporting requirements:

- Contractors employing four or more individuals must comply.
- Labor hours are clearly defined to exclude supervisory and executive roles.
- Contractors must verify compliance before beginning work.
- Monthly and final reports ensure transparency.
- Waivers are available when contractors demonstrate good-faith but unsuccessful efforts to secure apprentices.

This balanced framework promotes accountability while recognizing workforce realities.

The bill includes reasonable enforcement provisions to maintain the integrity of the system. Penalties for non-compliance and willful misrepresentation ensure that responsible contractors are not undercut by those who ignore workforce standards. At the same time, the waiver process provides flexibility when apprentices are not reasonably available.

Importantly, the bill applies to projects involving the University System of Maryland and Baltimore City Community College, ensuring that major public institutions participate in workforce development. It also respects local authority by not preempting additional workforce requirements enacted at the local level.

This legislation will:

- Expand access to high-quality, career-track jobs.
- Address skilled labor shortages in the construction industry.
- Increase productivity and safety through formal training.
- Ensure public dollars create long-term economic returns.

Apprenticeships are one of the most proven workforce development strategies available. Senate Bill 143 strengthens that model while maintaining flexibility and fairness.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 143.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Anderson
Business Agent
Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486

SB143_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

Affiliated with the National AFL-CIO

Donna S. Edwards
President

Samuel Epps, IV
Secretary-Treasurer

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SB 143 – Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Senate Finance Committee

February 26, 2026

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 143. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

SB 143 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 SB 143.



unions@mddclabor.org



www.mddclabor.org



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instagram.com/md_dc_aflcio

SUPPORT SB 143 - Public Works Contracts - Apprenti

Uploaded by: Jason Ascher

Position: FAV



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Finance

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 SB 143 - Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our four United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Locals, which represent over 10,000 Plumbers, Steamfitters, Welders, HVAC Techs, and Sprinkler Fitters across Maryland. On their behalf, I ask you to **SUPPORT SB 143**.

In the construction industry, an apprenticeship is the best way to train a new worker and a great way to change a person's life. Apprentices get trained in a skilled craft with both classroom and on-the-job training. In fact, the on-the-job training is what makes or breaks a good apprenticeship program. An apprentice works 1-on-1 with a skilled journeyman in their craft each workday. After work, an apprentice will attend class to learn the fundamentals and theory behind their work on the jobsite. This gives the apprentice a skill that no one can take away. Jobs may come and go, but what you learn in a true registered apprenticeship program lasts a lifetime.

The more registered apprentices working in Maryland, the more people are given an opportunity for a better life. As an apprentice in a registered union apprenticeship program, you get high-quality training free of charge and a career in a skilled trade, with the opportunity to grow in your craft and the ability to take care of yourself and your family with not just good wages, but benefits like health coverage and a pension. If you want, you can even start your own business and eventually help give new apprentices the same opportunity you had.

In a time when more workers are increasingly needed in the plumbing, pipefitting, and HVAC industry, apprenticeship requirements are a great way to increase the number of skilled workers. By requiring that all public construction projects use at least 20% of the workforce as registered apprentices, we ensure that, when tax dollars are spent, people have this great opportunity to join a skilled trade by increasing the number of registered apprentices in Maryland. Requiring registered apprentices to be on every public works job ensures that, along with knowing you are getting a well-trained worker, you know the worker is local because a Maryland registered apprenticeship program will have Maryland residents in the program.

SB 143 also establishes a reasonable standard for seeking a waiver of this requirement, ensuring that no local businesses are excluded from public construction contracts.

For the above reasons, we ask that you give **SB 143**.

Sincerely

Jason Ascher

Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5 – Lanham, MD
Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 10 – Richmond, VA/Roanoke, VA
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 110 – Norfolk, VA
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 74 – Newark, DE

Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486 – Baltimore, MD
Steamfitters Local 602 – Capitol Heights, MD
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 – Columbia, MD

SB0143 Testi.pdf

Uploaded by: Omar Diallo

Position: FAV

JOANNE C. BENSON
Legislative District 24
Prince George's County

MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Education, Business, and Administration

Pensions

Chair, Procurement

Joint Committees

Audit and Evaluation Committee

Children, Youth, and Families

Ending Homelessness

Fair Practices and
State Personnel Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson

**SB0143: Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements
(Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)**

Good afternoon, Chairman Senator Pamela Beidle, and Vic Chairman Senator Antonio Hays, and the esteemed members of the Finance Committee.

The bill SB0143 strengthens Maryland's workforce development pipeline by ensuring that public dollars invested in public works projects also invested directly in Maryland workers. As we continue to build roads, schools, and infrastructure across our State, we must also build career pathways that allow Marylanders to access skilled, family-supporting jobs in the trades.

SB0143 alters apprenticeship requirements for public works contracts by requiring certain contractors and subcontractors who employ four or more individuals on a covered project to employ the number of qualified apprentices or journey workers necessary to meet an applicable percentage of total labor hours on the project. Beginning January 1, 2027, that applicable percentage is 20 percent, and the Secretary of Labor will annually establish the applicable percentage for subsequent years.

Importantly, this bill shifts the focus from allowing payments in lieu of participation to emphasizing actual utilization of qualified apprentices and journey workers on job sites. This ensures that apprenticeship programs are not merely supported in theory but strengthened in practice through real training opportunities and direct workforce experience.

The bill also enhances transparency and accountability by requiring contractors and subcontractors to provide written verification before commencing work and to submit monthly reports detailing the total number of apprentices and journey workers and the total labor hours worked. The Department of Labor will maintain aggregated data on its website, promoting public transparency and strengthening oversight.

Additionally, SB0143 allows the Secretary to waive the requirements under specific circumstances when contractors can demonstrate that they requested qualified apprentices from all applicable apprenticeship training programs but were unable to secure placements. This ensures fairness while maintaining the integrity of the apprenticeship goals.

This legislation also clarifies that these apprenticeship requirements apply to the University System of Maryland and Baltimore City Community College, ensuring consistency across state-supported public works projects.

By prioritizing workforce participation on publicly funded projects, SB0143 promotes economic mobility, strengthens Maryland's skilled labor force, and ensures that taxpayer investments deliver both infrastructure and opportunity.

Thus, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0143 and thank you for your consideration.

SB 143 IBEW 24 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Rico Albacarys

Position: FAV

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

AFFILIATED WITH:

Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building Trades Council - AFL-CIO
Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council - AFL-CIO
Central MD Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Del-Mar-Va Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Maryland State - D.C. - AFL-CIO
National Safety Council



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Written Testimony of
Rico Albacarys, Assistant Business Agent, IBEW LOCAL 24
Before the Senate Finance Committee On
SB 143 Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce
Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Favorable

February 24, 2026

Madam Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Committee Members,

My name is Rico Albacarys, and I am a member and employee of IBEW Local 24. As a licensed electrician and apprenticeship graduate, I am writing to express my support for SB 143. Apprenticeship provided me with a direct pathway into a skilled career, allowing me to earn while I learned and build a future in the electrical industry.

Senate Bill 143 helps strengthen the career pipeline created through apprenticeship programs by ensuring public works projects utilize qualified apprentices alongside experienced journeypersons. These programs are one of the most effective workforce development tools we have, creating opportunities for individuals to enter the trades while meeting the growing demand for skilled workers.

When the State invests taxpayer dollars into public construction, those projects should also help train the next generation of Maryland's workforce. Expanding apprenticeship participation supports high quality training, safe jobsites, and long-term career opportunities for working families.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 143.

Sincerely,

Rico Albacarys
Assistant Business Agent
IBEW Local 24

SB0143_Testimony_Cross (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Dr Cashenna A Cross

Position: FWA

Testimony of The Honorable Dr Cashenna A Cross
Favorable With Amendments
Senate Bill 143 Public Works Contracts Apprenticeship Requirements

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 143 with amendments.

As a municipal leader and retired United States Air Force veteran, I have witnessed firsthand how strong workforce pipelines strengthen communities, stabilize families, and expand economic opportunity. Public works investments should not only build infrastructure but also build people. This legislation moves Maryland toward that goal by requiring meaningful participation in registered apprenticeship programs tied directly to public projects.

Requiring contractors and subcontractors to employ qualified apprentices or journeymen creates structured pathways into skilled trades and ensures that taxpayer funded projects produce long term workforce benefits. The reporting requirements contained in this bill also improve transparency by allowing the public to see measurable outcomes connected to state spending.

However, amendments are necessary to ensure successful implementation at the local level.

First, flexibility should be provided for municipalities and smaller contractors when regional apprenticeship availability is limited. While the waiver process exists, clearer timelines and standardized review criteria will prevent project delays that can increase costs for local governments.

Second, technical assistance should be incorporated through the Department of Labor to help small and minority owned businesses comply with apprenticeship participation requirements. Without implementation support, well intentioned policy may unintentionally reduce contractor participation and competition.

Third, phased implementation options should be considered for smaller public bodies managing limited capital budgets. Municipal governments operate under tight fiscal constraints, and predictable compliance pathways will help ensure projects remain financially viable.

Senate Bill 143 represents an important step toward aligning workforce development with public investment. With targeted amendments that recognize municipal realities, this legislation can expand opportunity while maintaining efficiency, fairness, and accountability.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report with amendments.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honorable Dr Cashenna A Cross Councilwoman At Large City of Glenarden

SB0143-FIN_MACo_SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FWA



Senate Bill 143

*Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements
(Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Finance and Budget and Taxation
Committees

Date: February 26, 2026

From: Karrington Anderson & Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 143 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill would establish apprenticeship utilization requirements for contractors and subcontractors on covered public works projects. Beginning January 1, 2027, the bill requires that 20% of total labor hours on a covered project be performed by qualified apprentices or journeyworkers. The bill also directs the Maryland Department of Labor to adopt implementing regulations.

Counties recognize the value of registered apprenticeship programs as a proven pathway to workforce development. Encouraging the use of apprentices and journeyworkers on public works projects can strengthen the construction talent pipeline, create career opportunities, and, over time, help stabilize labor costs by cultivating a skilled local workforce.

However, as drafted, SB 143 raises important concerns for local governments as project owners. The bill authorizes the Secretary of Labor, on or before December 31, 2027, and annually thereafter, to set the “applicable percentage” for the following calendar year and to alter that percentage to meet craft-specific supervision ratio requirements. MACo’s primary concern lies with this open-ended authority to adjust the percentage requirement each year. While the bill begins with a 20% standard, future increases, set administratively through regulations rather than legislatively, could materially affect project costs and bidder participation for local governments.

Public works projects are typically awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. If apprenticeship requirements become more stringent or unpredictable over time, the number of bidders and offerors may decline, particularly in smaller or rural jurisdictions where the pool of available apprenticeship program participants may be limited. Reduced competition can drive up costs for county-funded infrastructure, placing additional strain on already tight local budgets.

For these reasons, MACo respectfully requests an amendment to retain the 20% apprenticeship utilization requirement in statute and remove the provision authorizing the Secretary to reset or increase the applicable percentage annually. Maintaining a clear, stable, and legislatively established standard will provide certainty to public bodies while still advancing the bill’s workforce development goals.

With these amendments, SB 143 can strike a better balance between promoting the use of apprenticeship programs and safeguarding affordability and competition in public works contracting.

For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 143.

MACo’s Amendment on SB 143:

- On page 6, strike beginning with “(B)” in line 5 down through “CRAFT” in line 10.

AUC of MD_SB 143_UNFAV.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Andrew Griffin

Position: UNF



Whitney Beall
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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ASSOCIATE ADVISORS

Jonathan Kibler

Ed Russell

February 26, 2026

Legislative Position: Unfavorable **Senate Bill 143**

Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements
Senate Finance Committee

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the committee:

Established in 1950, the Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland, Inc. (AUC) is dedicated to advancing the utility contracting industry across the state. Our mission is to foster strong relationships between utility contractors and their clients, uphold the highest professional standards within the industry, and elevate the reputation of utility professionals within the business community. We actively advocate for public policies that address industry challenges and contribute to improving Maryland's overall business environment.

The Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland (AUC) strongly opposes SB 143, the Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act. As an organization representing primarily subcontractors in the construction industry, we believe this bill would have a devastating impact on our members and the construction industry as a whole.

As utility contractors, we are almost always subcontractors, oftentimes second-tier subs, working on public works projects. The workforce requirements outlined in this bill would be extremely difficult for us to meet, particularly given the specialized nature of our work. The bill's mandate to employ a certain number of qualified apprentices or journeymen would not only make it challenging for us to bid on public works contracts but also hinder the state's ability to complete projects on time and within budget.

Utility contractors play a crucial role in the construction process, and our work is often a necessary component of larger projects. However, the burdensome requirements of this bill would likely lead to our entire section of the industry struggling to meet the requirements to bid on public works contracts.

Furthermore, the bill's focus on apprenticeship programs, while well-intentioned, overlooks the complexities of the construction industry. Many of our members already participate in apprenticeship programs, but the bill's one-size-fits-all approach fails to account for the unique challenges and needs of different contractors and projects.

We urge the committee to consider the unintended consequences of this bill, the harm it would cause to the construction industry and the increased cost implications to completing state projects. . We believe that a more nuanced approach, one that takes into account the diverse needs and challenges of different contractors and projects, would be more effective in promoting workforce development and supporting the construction industry.

For these reasons, we urge an **unfavorable report on SB 143**.

Sincerely,

The Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland

MDCC_SB 143_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Grason Wiggins

Position: UNF



Senate Bill 143

Position: Unfavorable

Committee: Finance

Date: February 26, 2026

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) 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 health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce shares the goal of strengthening Maryland's workforce pipeline and supporting apprenticeship opportunities, however, SB 143 would impose rigid workforce participation mandates on public works contracts that could have significant unintended consequences for Maryland businesses and taxpayers.

Many contractors that perform public works projects, particularly specialty contractors and subcontractors, operate in highly specialized segments of the industry. These businesses often serve as subcontractors, sometimes at multiple tiers, and may not have direct control over overall workforce composition on a project. The bill's apprenticeship utilization requirements would make it significantly more difficult for these businesses to competitively bid on and perform public works contracts.

By mandating specific apprenticeship participation thresholds, SB 143 risks shrinking the pool of qualified bidders. Fewer bidders reduce competition, which in turn drives up project costs and delays completion timelines. At a time when the State faces significant infrastructure needs, Maryland should be encouraging broader participation in public projects, not erecting additional barriers to entry.

Additionally, while many Maryland businesses already voluntarily participate in apprenticeship and workforce development programs, a one-size-fits-all statutory mandate fails to account for the varying structures, trades, and project scopes that characterize Maryland's construction sector. The availability of registered apprentices and journey workers varies by region and specialty, and businesses cannot always access the workforce required to meet inflexible participation targets.

The Maryland Chamber supports policies that expand workforce development opportunities in a collaborative and flexible manner. However, SB 143 takes an overly prescriptive approach that could disrupt the workforce marketplace and increase the cost of delivering critical public infrastructure. **For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an unfavorable report on SB 143.**

S.B. 143- PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS- APPRENTICESHIP R

Uploaded by: Matthew Teffeu

Position: UNF



**Maryland Joint
Legislative Committee**

February 26, 2026

The Voice of Merit Construction

Mike Henderson

President

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Chris Garvey

President & CEO

*Chesapeake Shores Chapter
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Dan Bond CAE

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TO: SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

FROM: ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS

RE: S.B. 143- PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS- APPRENTICESHIP
REQUIREMENTS (MARYLAND WORKFORCE APPRENTICESHIP
UTILIZATION ACT)

POSITION: OPPOSE

Chair and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) opposes S.B. 143 which is before you today for consideration. We understand and appreciate the intent behind promoting apprenticeship programs. However, as written, S.B. 143, creates significant challenges and unintended consequences for Maryland businesses, particularly in the construction sector.

The bill mandates specific apprenticeship percentages on covered public works projects. While workforce development is crucial, imposing rigid quotas can be problematic. The availability of qualified apprentices varies geographically and across trades. Forcing contractors to meet arbitrary targets, especially the proposed 20% by 2027, could lead to project delays, increased costs, and a potential decline in the quality of work as contractors struggle to find enough qualified apprentices.

A more flexible, market-driven approach would be more effective. Nearly 90% of Maryland's construction workforce operates in an open shop environment, where contractors hire employees first and then sponsor them for apprenticeship. The bill's requirement to "request apprentices" from all programs does not align with this hiring model. The reporting requirements under the bill, including monthly reports with detailed apprentice and journeyworker information, create a significant administrative burden for contractors and subcontractors.

This adds to the cost of doing business and diverts resources away from actual construction work. While S.B. 143 provides for waivers, the process appears overly bureaucratic and potentially difficult to navigate. Requiring contractors to request apprentices from all applicable apprenticeship programs, including those with whom they don't have existing agreements,



**Maryland Joint
Legislative Committee**



and documenting denials or lack of response within specific timeframes, is impractical and creates unnecessary hurdles.

The mandated apprenticeship percentages and the associated administrative burdens will inevitably lead to increased costs for public works projects. These costs will ultimately be borne by Maryland taxpayers.

We believe there are more effective ways to promote apprenticeship programs without imposing inflexible mandates and creating undue burdens on businesses. Incentivizing apprenticeship participation through tax credits or other financial benefits, rather than imposing penalties, would be a more constructive approach.

On behalf of the over 1,500 ABC members in Maryland, we respectfully request an unfavorable report on S.B. 143.

Matt Teffeau
Director of Government Affairs



SB143_IECChesapeake_INFO

Uploaded by: Kevin O'Keeffe

Position: INFO

February 26, 2026

To: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: **Letter of Information SB143 - Public Works Contracts - Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)**

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents approximately 150 electrical contractors who employ approximately 9,000 workers in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, IEC Chesapeake has nearly 1,300 electrical apprentices. IEC Chesapeake would like to provide the Committee with informational comments on SB143.

IEC Chesapeake is a strong supporter of increasing apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland. As noted above, IEC Chesapeake currently has approximately 1,300 electrical apprentices in the electrical industry. IEC Chesapeake understands it is the intent of SB143 to increase apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland. IEC Chesapeake offers the following comments for the Committee's consideration.

- On Page 6, Lines 2-4, we believe that the applicable percentage of 20% beginning January 1, 2027 may be unrealistic.
- On Page 6, Lines 5-7, we note that there are no criteria listed for the Labor Secretary in determining the applicable percentage for the following calendar year.
- On Page 7, Lines 9-12, we recommend not to eliminate the ability of a subcontractor to contribute to a registered apprenticeship program.
- On Page 8, Lines 16-19, we believe the requirement of at least 90 calendar days before the date the contractor or subcontract without a participation agreement to use apprentice labor may be too short.
- On Page 8, Lines 21-24, we believe that it is duplicative and unnecessary for a contractor or subcontractor to be required to submit a monthly report to the Department of Labor since the information is already provided through a certified payroll report to the Department of Labor.

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@iecchesapeake.com or Kevin O'Keeffe at 410-382-7844 or at kevin@kokeffelaw.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.

SB0143 - Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship R

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

February 26, 2026

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 143 - Public Works Contracts – Apprenticeship Requirements (Maryland Workforce Apprenticeship Utilization Act)

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 143 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 143 would require that 20% of all work on construction contracts be done by apprentices or journeymen, even if the scope of the contract does not require it. Meeting the 20% requirement for apprentices, particularly in more specialized crafts, may be difficult for some contractors to achieve. Additionally, this would require substantially more supervision by skilled workers as State law generally requires a one-to-one ratio of apprentice to skilled tradesperson. These challenges may reduce the number of bidders and offerors on State projects and reduce the level of competition for those contracts, which has been shown to increase project costs.

The percentage of required apprenticeships changing every year will be a challenge for MDOT to implement. For any projects we intend to advertise early in the calendar year, MDOT will have to wait for the updated percentage to be released before it can finalize the solicitation documents. This may result in delay of projects as MDOT waits for the apprenticeship number to be announced every year, or delays in the event that a contractor is seeking a waiver.

SB 143’s requirements, and the administrative effort associated with applying for waivers and submitting monthly reports to the Maryland Department of Labor, where relevant, may have the effect of dissuading some contractors and subcontractors from participating in MDOT projects.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee to consider this information during its deliberations of Senate Bill 143.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Mickler
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090