

SB 777.pdf

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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
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairs Beidle, Guzzone, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Workforce Association and Maryland's 13 Local Workforce Development Boards, I write to express strong support for SB 777. Maryland's local workforce boards serve as the front line of the State's workforce system. When layoffs occur, industries shift, or employers expand, it is the local system that responds directly to workers and businesses. SB 777 strengthens that local response capacity in several important ways.

First, ensuring that, in the event funding from the Hospital Employees Retraining Fund is needed, local workforce development boards are at the table, so that when a hospital closes or downsizes, retraining funds move quickly to the communities experiencing displacement. Healthcare closures have regional ripple effects. Local boards are best positioned to assess skill gaps, coordinate retraining, and align impacted workers with in-demand occupations.

Second, strengthening the Quick Response Program by allowing funding to flow directly to local boards, who already have the responsibility of administering federal Rapid Response activities, enhances speed and accountability. Rapid response is most effective when decisions are made close to the labor market, in coordination with employers, economic development partners, and training providers.

Third, leveraging local boards to administer apprenticeship-related employer grants under the ACTION framework expands access to work-based learning, particularly in high-poverty communities. Apprenticeship remains one of the most reliable pathways to family-sustaining wages. Local boards already convene employers, community colleges, and training providers and can deploy these funds strategically.

It is also important to recognize the broader funding context. The largest source of workforce development funding is the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In recent years, federal allocations have shifted, creating increased pressure on local systems to stretch limited dollars while maintaining service levels. Local workforce boards are often asked to do more with less, even as employer demand for talent and worker need for training continues to grow.

SB 777 helps address that reality. The bill allows State workforce development resources to be leveraged through the existing local infrastructure. If Maryland is investing State funds in workforce development, those dollars should be accessible to the locally designated workforce development boards that are already accountable under federal law, embedded in their communities, and directly responsible for serving workers and businesses.

These boards are the State's local experts in workforce development. They understand regional labor markets, employer demand, and the needs of jobseekers. Ensuring they are eligible to receive and administer State workforce resources strengthens alignment, reduces duplication, and maximizes return on investment.

SB 777 reinforces a core principle of workforce development: statewide strategy paired with local implementation. For these reasons, the Maryland Workforce Association respectfully urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 777.

Sincerely,

Kirkland Murray
Maryland Workforce Association

Written Testimony SB777.pdf

Uploaded by: Johnny Ray Salling

Position: FAV

JOHNNY RAY SALLING
Legislative District 6
Baltimore County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Senate Finance Committee
Chair Pamela Beidle
Vice Chair Antonio Hayes
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis Maryland, 21401

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 777 – Workforce Development and Local Workforce Development Boards.

Major Layoffs and reductions in operations can have significant consequences for workers and the communities that depend on those jobs. While Maryland has systems in place to assist displaced workers, the current structure for distributing certain retraining resources can limit how quickly those resources reach workers at the local level.

Senate Bill 777 strengthens the State's workforce response system by directing the Maryland Department of Labor to allocate funds from the Hospital Employees Retraining Fund to local workforce development boards when hospital closures or workforce reductions occur. Providing these resources directly to local workforce systems will allow communities to respond more quickly and effectively when workers lose their jobs.

This legislation does not remove funds from hospitals nor diminish the support available to hospital employees affected by closures or layoffs. Hospitals are critical institutions in our communities, and the retraining fund exists because hospital workforce reductions can have profound impacts on surrounding communities. Senate Bill 777 does not deplete these funds, create new programs, or require additional state funding. Instead, it ensures that existing resources are deployed more effectively by integrating local workforce development boards into rapid response, retraining, and apprenticeship efforts.

The bill also strengthens coordination within the State's Quick Response Program, ensuring that workforce development boards are engaged when employers experience reductions in operations so displaced workers can be connected more quickly with training and employment opportunities.

By strengthening the role of local workforce development boards in responding to job loss, Senate Bill 777 promotes a more responsive and community-focused approach to workforce recovery. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 777.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnny Ray Salling".

Senator Johnny Ray Salling

SB0777-BT_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Karrington Anderson

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 777

Labor and Employment - Workforce Development and Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Workforce Solutions Investment Act)

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance and Budget and Taxation Committees

Date: March 11, 2026

From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 777. This bill strengthens coordination between state workforce initiatives and local workforce development boards. SB 777 ensures that when the State makes strategic investments in workforce development, local workforce leaders are actively involved in planning, consultation, and, where appropriate, the administration of funds.

Local workforce development boards provide key infrastructure for workforce services across Maryland. With guidance and leadership from private industry partners, these boards identify regional skill shortages, cultivate relationships with employers and workers, and integrate workforce development with economic development and education systems. As important players in communities, local boards are uniquely positioned to develop and implement tailored workforce strategies that reflect local labor market needs. SB 777 appropriately recognizes and reinforces this role.

The bill enhances several important programs by requiring coordination with local workforce development boards. SB 777 allocates funds to the local workforce development board through the Hospital Employees Retraining Fund to ensure that rapid retraining and reemployment strategies are locally driven and responsive to employer demand. Similarly, the bill aligns the State's Quick Response Program more directly with local workforce boards when assisting private-sector employers experiencing layoffs or operational reductions.

SB 777 also strengthens the Apprenticeship Career Training in Our Neighborhoods (ACTION) Program by partnering with local workforce development boards to administer grants and implement programming. In addition, the Direct Care Workforce Innovation Program must consult with local workforce boards, ensuring that investments are informed by regional workforce data and employer engagement.

By embedding local workforce development boards into these initiatives, SB 777 promotes accountability, reduces duplication, and maximizes the impact of limited workforce dollars. Counties strongly support policies that leverage existing local infrastructure and expertise. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 777.

SB777_MD Labor_LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna Bachman

Position: INFO

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 777

TO: Finance Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)
DATE: March 11, 2026
BILL: Local Workforce Solutions Investment Act

MD LABOR POSITION: INFORMATIONAL

SB777 creates multiple requirements throughout the Labor and Employment Article for MD Labor to direct funding, **as available**, for existing initiatives to the state's 13 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), including but not limited to:

- A requirement to allocate funding from the Hospital Employees Retraining Fund to LWDBs in any event of a hospital closing, delicensing, downsizing or merger; and
- A requirement that, to the extent funding is available, for MD Labor to provide LWDBs with funding for “quick start” efforts supporting workers impacted by reductions in force.

Under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), MD Labor oversees the LWDBs and distributes grants to support their program delivery for adults, youth, and dislocated workers through the State's American Job Center network. Each year, MD Labor allocates federal WIOA Title I funds— including Dislocated Worker/Rapid Response dollars— to support laid-off workers and “quick start” activities.

In the current Fiscal Year, MD Labor provided the LWDBs with \$9,234,646 of WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker/Rapid Response funding to administer dislocated services and Rapid Response programming, (referred to as “quick start” in State statute).

MD Labor's [Policy Issuance 2025-02: Rapid Response](#) already establishes annual funding for these services—exceeding federal requirements— and outlines a transparent process for LWDBs to request additional resources in response to significant closures or dislocation events. For example, in 2025, MD Labor provided \$350,000 in supplemental Rapid Response funding to WorkSource Montgomery in response to the increase of federal workers needing reemployment assistance. The Department also works closely with the LWDBs and regularly shares updates regarding mass layoffs and retraining initiatives.

MD Labor recognizes the critical role that the LWDBs play in the workforce system. However, to remain maximally responsive and to coordinate resources effectively at the regional level, the State must retain flexibility to invest in LWDBs or other workforce solutions as circumstances warrant. Finally, while the bill references various MD Labor investments, **the Department assumes that the “funding” referenced in item (D) of page 3 of the bill—which would require MD Labor to provide funding to LWDBs “to the extent funding is available”—only refers to existing WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker funds that are already allocated to LWDBs. At this time, the Department is not aware of additional resources that could be redirected for these purposes.**

The Department respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as they evaluate SB777. For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti at Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov.