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HB 1165 - State Procurement - Apprenticeship Program Accountability and Completion

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

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SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1165. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

A strong workforce relies on highly skilled workers. Apprenticeships have consistently proven to be an effective way for individuals to gain hands-on experience and technical education, ensuring they develop the necessary expertise needed for their careers while providing employers with a competent and capable workforce.

In 2025, the General Assembly passed HB 500 - the Procurement Reform Act mandating that bidders and contractors either participate in a certified apprenticeship training program or make payments into the State Apprenticeship Training Fund. HB 1165 builds on this work by adding a simple yet impactful requirement that any apprenticeship program used to meet State procurement or public works obligations must meet a minimum completion rate of 25%.

Completion rates are a significant indicator of whether an apprenticeship program delivers on its promise: providing real training, mentorship, and advancement. When the State invests public dollars in procurement and construction, it should be supporting programs that prepare workers for long-term careers. This legislation helps ensure that workers have a pathway to completion.

When apprentices complete their training, they strengthen the entire workforce, raising standards, improving project quality, and ensuring Maryland has a stable pipeline of skilled workers ready to meet the State's needs. HB 1165 strengthens this expectation by supporting apprentices not just through their recruitment but also through to completion.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 1165.



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