



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB1358 - Labor and Employment - Workforce Development and Local Workforce
Development Boards (Local Workforce Solutions Investment Act)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.

The Local Workforce Solutions Investment Act is a simple and timely update that strengthens Maryland's workforce system, and it does so with zero fiscal impact.

To give you a little history, Local workforce boards were established under the federal *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)* which helps people gain the job training and skills they need and helps employers find qualified workers.. These boards work in every part of the state and make sure job training programs match the actual needs of employers and the job market.

Maryland currently has 13 local workforce development boards, each serving to respond to employer demand, in all areas, whether it be rural, suburban and urban.

Maryland, like every other state in the nation, maintains dedicated local workforce boards that meet the needs of businesses and workers in their communities. However, while federal workforce programs recognize these boards as central coordinators, certain state-funded workforce initiatives do not consistently integrate them into planning or eligibility structures. Simply put, Maryland has more than one workforce system, and this bill makes sure they are working together and can fully take part in workforce programs and solutions.

This legislation does not create new programs or require additional state funding. Instead, it ensures that existing workforce resources are deployed more effectively by formally integrating local workforce development boards into rapid response efforts, retraining initiatives, and apprenticeship coordination.

When layoffs, hospital closures, or reductions in operations occur, local workforce boards are already on the ground working with employers, community colleges, economic development partners, and displaced workers. This bill ensures they receive timely notification and the authority to act immediately, using tools and funding streams that already exist.

By improving coordination and communication within Maryland's workforce system, this legislation reduces duplication of services, accelerates reemployment, strengthens employer engagement, and delivers better outcomes for workers and businesses alike, all without increasing costs to taxpayers.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report.