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The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Maryland Senate
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 3 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Melissa Wells, Chair
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 – Apprenticeship Graduation Rates

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Wells, and Honorable members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165, relating to apprenticeship graduation rates. I appear in my capacity as an attorney with Manno & Associates, LLC, a government-relations and regulatory law firm engaged in workforce development, large-scale industrial development, and matters affecting complex construction and industrial sectors. I previously served in the Maryland House of Delegates and the Maryland Senate, and currently represent a coordinated consortium spanning the full industrial development ecosystem—including industrial trade organizations, signatory contractors, developers, a joint labor–management organization, and a large trade association—across both public and private-sector projects.

From a legal and policy perspective, Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 addresses an accountability gap in existing law. Current procurement statutes permit participation in a registered apprenticeship program—or contribution to the State Apprenticeship Training Fund—but do not require programs to demonstrate meaningful completion outcomes.

Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 – Correspondence

Registration alone is not a reliable proxy for effectiveness, and some programs graduate only a small fraction of entrants despite public investment.

The legislation corrects this deficiency by requiring that apprenticeship programs used in covered State procurement demonstrate a minimum 25 percent completion rate, as determined by the Maryland Department of Labor. This is not punitive or exclusionary, but a modest, objective baseline aligning procurement requirements with measurable workforce outcomes.

From a legal standpoint, the bill is sound and narrowly tailored. It is trade-neutral, does not mandate union affiliation, preserves existing statutory alternatives—including participation in the State Apprenticeship Training Fund—and relies on an objective metric administered by the appropriate State agency.

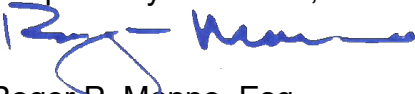
From a workforce and economic perspective, completion—not enrollment—is where the public return on investment occurs. Research shows that apprenticeship benefits accrue most strongly to completers, including higher lifetime earnings, increased tax contributions, reduced reliance on public assistance, and stronger workforce attachment. A completion threshold ensures that State procurement dollars support training models that deliver these outcomes.

As a practitioner representing contractors and employers, I can attest that apprenticeship completion is essential to business viability. Skilled journeyworkers are produced by programs that graduate apprentices, and contractors who invest heavily in training are disadvantaged when low-performing programs are treated as equivalent under procurement law. Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 helps level that field.

Finally, from an equity perspective, apprenticeship opportunity must lead to completion to fulfill its promise. Access alone is insufficient. Programs that graduate apprentices provide the structure and mentoring necessary to translate opportunity into durable economic mobility.

For these reasons, Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 represents prudent, evidence-based policymaking that strengthens workforce outcomes, promotes fiscal stewardship, and reinforces accountability in State procurement. I respectfully urge a **Favorable Report**.

Respectfully submitted,



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