



Delegate Melissa Wells, Chair
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
143 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 5, 2026

RE: HB 194 – FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS – Incarcerated Job Training Act

Dear Chair Wells and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 250 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

HB 194 creates an apprenticeship program for incarcerated individuals in skilled trades, including partnerships with private employers. This allows participants to serve as paid apprentices to develop marketable job skills and earn a wage that can be used upon their release.

MTBMA supports HB 194 because it aligns with our industry’s mission to expand the skilled workforce and create robust pipelines for talent in the construction and transportation sectors. This program offers a proactive way to address labor shortages through vocational investment without impacting dedicated transportation funds.

However, to ensure the program's success for private industry, we respectfully request the Committee to adopt amendments that establish clear "guardrails" for participating firms. These amendments should explicitly reinforce that employer participation is strictly voluntary, provide clear language regarding legal liability, and ensure that the administrative costs and operational risks for employers are manageable. With these protections in place, HB 194 can serve as an effective tool for both social rehabilitation and the continued delivery of Maryland’s critical infrastructure projects.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association