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TESTIMONY OF ROBERT COOPER, JR.
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IN SUPPORT

SENATE BILL 673 / HOUSE BILL 1165 –
STATE PROCUREMENT – APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY AND
COMPLETION

BEFORE THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
AND THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT, LABOR, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Wells, and Honorable Members of the Committees:

On behalf of Sprinkler Fitters Local 669, I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165.

Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 represents a highly skilled workforce specializing in the installation and maintenance of fire sprinkler and fire suppression systems on public and private construction projects throughout Maryland and across the country. Our members perform life-safety work that protects buildings, workers, and the public, and that work depends on rigorous training and apprenticeship standards.

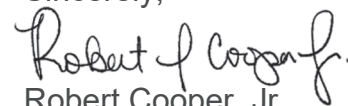
Local 669's registered apprenticeship programs emphasize technical proficiency, code compliance, and safety. Apprenticeship completion is critical in our trade, where incomplete training can compromise system performance and public safety. Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165 reinforces the importance of ensuring that apprenticeship programs relied upon in State procurements are not only registered, but demonstrably effective.

This legislation builds on Maryland's existing procurement framework by adding a reasonable completion-rate standard, while preserving the current statutory options available to contractors. It does not restrict access to State projects, but instead aligns public procurement with real workforce outcomes.

From the perspective of Sprinkler Fitters Local 669, successful apprenticeship completion strengthens the skilled workforce, supports contractor reliability, and ensures that State projects are built and maintained to the highest safety standards.

For these reasons, Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 respectfully urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 673 / House Bill 1165.

Sincerely,


Robert Cooper, Jr.
Business Manager