

PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS APPRENTICESHIP

WASHINGTON, D.C., JOINT PLUMBING APPRENTICE COMMITTEE

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U. A. Local Union No. 5
Washington, D.C.

PLUMBERS
GASFITTERS
WELDERS
SERVICE TECHNICIANS



Mechanical Contractors, D.C.
Association, Inc.

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TESTIMONY OF CHRIS BIONDI

TRAINING DIRECTOR

WASHINGTON, DC JOINT PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEE

BEFORE THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT, LABOR, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 673 / HOUSE BILL 1165 – FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Wells and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Chris Biondi, and I serve as the Training Director for the Washington, MD Joint Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee, which administers the registered apprenticeship program for Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5. In that role, I am responsible for apprentice recruitment, classroom and on-the-job training coordination, mentoring, and progression through to journey-level completion.

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 1165.

From the perspective of an apprenticeship training director, completion is the most important measure of whether an apprenticeship program is working. Enrollment alone does not produce skilled workers. Apprenticeship requires sustained instruction, supervision, contractor engagement, and support systems that carry apprentices through to graduation and into long-term careers.

House Bill 1165 reflects that reality. By requiring that apprenticeship programs used on covered State procurement demonstrate a **minimum 25 percent completion rate**, as determined by the Maryland Department of Labor, the bill establishes a modest and reasonable baseline for program accountability. This threshold is well below what effective programs strive to achieve, but it ensures that publicly supported programs are producing real workforce outcomes.


As someone directly responsible for training outcomes, I can say that programs committed to apprentices success can and do meet this standard. Completion-focused programs invest in instruction, mentorship, and coordination with signatory contractors to ensure

apprentices progress, graduate, and enter the workforce as skilled journeyworkers. Those are the programs that should be relied upon in public contracting.

This legislation does not restrict opportunity or limit access to apprenticeships. Instead, it protects apprentices from entering programs that lack the structure or commitment necessary to support completion, and it reinforces best practices across the apprenticeship system.

For these reasons, House Bill 1165 supports training equality, workforce readiness, and responsible use of public dollars. I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report**.

Sincerely,



Chris Biondi

Training Director

Washington, DC Joint Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee

On behalf of Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5