

Testimony for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future

SB795

Youth Apprenticeship 2.0 Act of 2020

February 17, 2020

My name is Duane Arbogast, and I serve as the Chief of Strategy and Innovation at the Children's Guild. The Children's Guild is the parent organization that manages the Tranzed Apprenticeship Service, the first apprenticeship intermediary in Maryland, and the Tranzed Academy for Working Students (TAWS), currently in Montgomery County Public Schools. TAWS serves students who have already found jobs and are trying to maximize their work experience. We build flexible academic schedules around our students and provide career counseling.

We have learned many lessons from our students. These include:

- Students want to work and in many cases need to work to support their families;
- TAWS students understand the value of both time and money, making their schedules work;
- TAWS students are resourceful, finding transportation, clothing and childcare;
- TAWS students find entry level positions in retail, hospitality, child and adult care, and construction; and
- While most TAWS students want to go to college, financial burdens and responsibilities, make college entry difficult and four year graduation rates rare.

With this in mind, Youth Apprenticeships makes perfect sense. It leverages those entry level jobs into career opportunities by combining the work experience with related course work. Youth apprentices enter into registered apprenticeships, which, in many cases, is paid for by the employers. Senate Bill 795 memorializes the Maryland Apprenticeship Program which awards course credit and provides related course work with cooperating employers, and is currently working in several Maryland school districts, including Montgomery County.

TAWS is actively working with Montgomery County Public Schools to increase the employer pool and market directly to students. We are also working with employers to help them solve their recruitment and pipeline needs by designing registered apprenticeships. We ask that the legislature and local districts incentivize employers to implement apprenticeship programs.

SB 795 connects both the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and Maryland's workforce needs. I urge you to pass this bill.