
Senate Bill 357

Date: February 11, 2021
Committee: Finance Committee
Bill Title: Joint Committee on Workforce Development
Re: Letter of Information

Senate Bill 357 proposes to create a Joint Committee on Workforce Development composed of ten Senators and Delegates, which would monitor and review current and future operations of the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) programs, including the Governor's Workforce Development Board and the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council.

The proposed Joint Committee on Workforce Development would be duplicative of other committees and activities that are happening throughout the State and could lead to conflict. Ongoing monitoring occurs both from state individuals and federal programmatic reporting. From an operational standpoint, additional programmatic oversight would likely involve additional meetings and reporting. It is unclear who will staff the joint committee. The time and resources devoted to this oversight would be resources taken from core duties.

The Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) has a member of both the Senate and House of Delegates who serve at the pleasure of the presiding officers who appointed them. These members currently provide oversight to the GWDB, workforce programs, and workforce initiatives. There are oversight committees for CTE and the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program. MD Labor and the GWDB also work with members of the Maryland Higher Education Commission on workforce development programs.

Additionally, the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council currently provides oversight to the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program. The council is a twelve-member body charged with formulating policies, registering apprenticeship standards and agreements, determining which occupations are apprenticeable, and formulating and adopting standards of apprenticeship that safeguard the welfare of all apprentices.

Beyond the existing State-level oversight of apprenticeship in Maryland, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) provides oversight and technical assistance to the State. It is worth noting that the USDOL recognizes Maryland as a national leader on its apprenticeship expansion efforts.

The Department respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information.