
Senate Bill 205

Date: March 22, 2022

Committee: House Economic Matters

Bill Title: Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning - Apprenticeship and Training Council - Sunset Extension

Re: Letter of Support With Amendment

SB205, *Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL)- Apprenticeship and Training Council - Sunset Extension*, proposes to reauthorize the designation of the Department of Labor's DWDAL as the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA), overseeing the duties of the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC). MD Labor also respectfully requests that the Committee remove the amended language that shifts the sunset to July 1, 2025 and return to the original bill language that extends the sunset until July 1, 2034.

While 24 states allow for their Registered Apprenticeship (RA) systems to receive oversight directly from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship (OA), Maryland is one of 30 states and territories with SAA designation. Other states, such as Colorado, are actively transitioning to SAA authority, as it provides access to additional funding and the ability to be more responsive to the needs of the business and jobseeker communities.

The bill is critical to the continuation of DWDAL's robust efforts to expand and diversify Registered Apprenticeship. As the authorized SAA, DWDAL is poised to apply for, and secure, federal discretionary funding designed *exclusively* for scaling Registered Apprenticeships at the state level. With greater access to funding, MD Labor can directly and more effectively respond to business needs by granting seed funding for new program activities and providing enhanced technical assistance, grounded in knowledge of Maryland rules and regulations.

During the Hogan administration, the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program was transferred internally at MD Labor from the Division of Labor and Industry to the DWDAL, allowing for stronger integration with the State's workforce system. **During DWDAL's tenure as the SAA, Registered Apprenticeship metrics have greatly improved.** Immediately prior to the last sunset review period in December 2012, the number of Registered Apprentices in Maryland was 7,645. As of December 31, 2021, Maryland has **11,404** Registered Apprentices and 181 active RA sponsors, marking the highest number of active programs in over a decade, including **two straight years of 10,000+ apprentices** registered for the first time in State history. As the SAA, DWDAL has also successfully worked with businesses to expand into new industries, such as healthcare and information technology, in addition to expanding opportunities for returning citizens, individuals with disabilities, women, and minorities.

With this information, the Department respectfully asks for a favorable report with amendment from the committee and stands ready to answer any questions the committee may have.