



50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401
Office: 410-841-5772 • Fax: 410-841-5987 • TTY: 800-735-2258
Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov
Website: www.rural.maryland.gov
Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

John Hartline, Chair

Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 205 - Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning - Apprenticeship and
Training Council - Sunset Extension
House Economic Matters Committee
March 22, 2022

The Rural Maryland Council supports Senate Bill 205 - Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning - Apprenticeship and Training Council - Sunset Extension. As amended, the bill would continue the Apprenticeship and Training Council in accordance with the provisions of the Maryland Program Evaluation Act (sunset law) by extending to July 1, 2025, the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the Council.

The Apprentice and Training Council formulates apprenticeship policies, registers standards and agreements, determines which skilled trades are apprenticeable, and formulates and adopts standards of apprenticeship that safeguard the welfare of all apprentices. These apprenticeship programs help Marylanders gain skills and earn higher wages while working and earning an income during the process. Additionally, these programs grow Maryland's workforce with skilled workers that can provide services to their communities. These apprenticeships include a wide range of occupations including electrician, sheet metal worker, automobile mechanic, air conditioning mechanic, cyber security professional, and biotechnology instrumentation technician.

Apprenticeship programs are also great alternatives for those who do not desire a four-year college degree to still obtain a good paying job. It also allows young adults to stay in their hometowns while completing their apprenticeship and become a part of the local workforce after completion. Many rural areas are losing their younger population because recent high school graduates are leaving to obtain a college education and not returning home after completion due to a lack of available jobs in their field. This has created an aging population with a shrinking workforce to provide the needed jobs in the community. Apprenticeship programs allow students to gain skills that their communities need without having to leave their hometown if they do not desire to do so. Last year, the leaders of Maryland passed a bipartisan budget agreement that dedicated \$75 million of the American Rescue Plan funds to a variety of apprenticeships and employment training programs.

The Rural Maryland Council respectfully asks for a favorable report on Senate Bill 205.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.

"A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland"