



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

March 5, 2020

Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East
Annapolis, MD 21041

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of HB 1457: Apprenticeship Start-Up Act of 2020

Dear Chair Kaiser,

I commend Delegate Feldmark for introducing House Bill 1457, which would support apprenticeship programs registered with the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council.

House Bill 1457 would enable taxpayers to apply for an annual tax credit of \$3,000 if they hire more than five apprentices each year. The career of trades are declining and apprenticeships provide an opportunity for those seeking to go straight into the career field pose an opportunity. Provide alternatives to a college education. Benefits not only to Maryland's economy but providing practical and vital services to our communities.

Howard County has 19 registered apprentice programs and 1,092 apprentices across the industries of hospitality, construction, public safety, information technology, and healthcare. The Howard County Public School System's program, Apprenticeship Maryland, is one of twelve school system programs across the State that are registered with the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council. Participating students gain further education and on-the-job training in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) occupations.

Howard Community College currently offers four apprenticeship programs. AT&T is partnering with Howard Community College to help 24 students pursue information technology careers and earn industry certifications through its AT&T Catapult Program. Last year, Howard County Government held its first "Apprenticeship Day" to connect jobseekers with resources and registered apprenticeships. My Fiscal Year 2020 budget also included funding for the Department of Public Works' Bureau of Facilities to support three new apprenticeship positions. These government apprentices help keep county facilities operating safely and effectively.

House Bill 1457 will build on current investments in apprenticeships across our State. Incentives to expand apprenticeship programs can help more workers gain the skills they need to advance their careers.

As a former educator and father of two, I understand the rising cost of tuition and the burden of student loan debt. Apprenticeships serve as an option for students approaching graduation to focus on being ready to go into the workforce if they choose. College and career readiness. These programs exist not only for students

I welcome your partnership and urge a favorable report on HB 1457.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive