



February 6, 2017

The Honorable Edward J. Kasemeyer
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB699 - Providing Our Workers Education and Readiness (POWER) - Apprenticeship Act
– **Oppose**

Dear Senator Kasemeyer:

Senate Bill 699 would require a contractor or subcontractor awarded a contract for a construction project that receives funding from the State capital budget to be affiliated with, and to use apprentices from, an apprenticeship program that is registered with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation or the United States Department of Labor, or require that contractor or subcontractor to pay into the State Apprenticeship Training Fund or to certain apprenticeship programs.

It would also require that the contractor or subcontractor only use apprentices from these “approved” programs, or essentially pay a penalty.

Mandating that employers offer training only to those the state says are worthy of training, or pay into a fund, is not a responsible or business-friendly way to produce a viable workforce. While the Chamber supports efforts to encourage jobs in the skilled trades, this bill certainly appears to be a move to support unions over business. Union membership has been declining for decades and is now at its lowest level since data has been kept. Passing legislation that is designed to shore up such organizations is not the job of government.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 560 members, opposes this bill and asks that you give it an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Mike McMullin'.

Mike McMullin
President
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Senator Justin Ready
Delegate Susan W. Krebs

**Carroll County Chamber of Commerce • 9 East Main Street • Westminster, MD 21157
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