

BILL: Senate Bill 517
TITLE: Career Apprenticeship Investment Act
DATE: February 20, 2018
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Finance Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, supports Senate Bill 517.

MABE supports this bill's proposal to establish a grant program in the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to provide grants to apprenticeship sponsors to create degree apprenticeships in workforce shortage employment categories, including: construction management; child care management; information technology; and nursing. In addition, this bill would establish a matching grant program for local governments to create apprenticeships for hard-to-fill local government jobs.

Importantly, Senate Bill 517 would also create a statewide media campaign to promote participation by employers and students in career and technical education and apprenticeships in workforce shortage occupations in the state. For local boards, it is appreciated that this initiative would include a matching grant program for local media campaigns to promote participation by employers and students for career and technical education and apprenticeships in workforce shortage occupations in local jurisdictions.

Maryland State law also requires the State Board of Education, in consultation with DLLR and the Governor's Workforce Development Board, to develop statewide career and technical education (CTE) goals. Specifically, goals must be set for each year from 2018 through 2024 so that by January 1, 2025, 45% of high school students successfully complete a CTE program, earn industry-recognized occupational or skill credentials, or complete a registered youth or other apprenticeship before graduating high school. This bold statewide goal is conceptually aligned with federal education reforms; and will require significant state investments to achieve.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and Maryland State ESSA Plan, prominently feature a strong emphasis on Career and Technology Education (CTE) and apprenticeship programs. Maryland's statewide accountability system provides "credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum" for those students who, among other criteria, have:

- completed a youth or other apprenticeship training program approved by the Maryland Apprenticeship Training Council;
- completed an industry certification aligned with an MSDE-approved CTE program and achieved CTE concentrator level status or higher; or
- completed an MSDE-approved Career and Technology Education program.

As Maryland strives to expand CTE and apprenticeship programs, it is imperative that federal program funding continues to provide a substantial amount of the funding for these programs. Therefore, MABE is advocating for the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. As envisioned by Every Student Succeeds Act, the new Perkins CTE Act should cultivate aligned and innovative academic and credentialing programs designed to advance 21st Century skills and should help school systems offer practical training through apprenticeships, expand dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities, hire and retain skilled CTE educators, and develop classrooms designed and equipped to deliver high quality CTE instruction.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 517.