



Pennsylvania Senate Committee on Labor and Industry

Testimony for the March 22, 2016 Hearing on Apprenticeship in Pennsylvania

Currently, there is a deficit of approximately 2 million tradespeople throughout the United States. Efforts must be made to promote awareness about the lucrative and rewarding careers in the trades and increase the training and development of skilled men and women who are interested in pursuing in-demand careers as craftspeople or technicians.

Senate Bill 761, which will repeal the Apprenticeship and Training Act and the State Apprenticeship and Training Council, places Pennsylvania's apprenticeship training programs under Federal oversight and supports the more favorable Federal hiring guidelines.

In an effort to increase workforce development of the apprenticeship trades, Senate Bill 280 supports a more level playing field for employers to hire, educate and train men and women interested in post-secondary, work-based learning in the in-demand construction trades, emerging occupations, high technology and green industries. In addition, S.B. 280 supports more balanced representation of collective bargaining unit and open shop employees on the State Apprenticeship Advisory Council.

This bill allows companies to train more apprentices with more favorable ratios of two apprentices to one journeyman which is more closely aligned with the Federal one apprentice to one journeyman ratio. Employers will increase the training talent pool in their companies by increasing the number of apprentices they can hire, educate and train. Awareness and education must begin at the secondary school level through school-to-work programs and high school guidance department career counseling. This will also be enhanced by using the One-Stop Career Center System encouraging outreach job opportunities to minorities, women and high school graduates seeking a rewarding, challenging and marketable career.

At the community college level, occupational training curriculum should be aligned with nationally recognized and certified coursework that would be valued by all employers throughout the state seeking to hire a college graduate. With an accredited and certified college curriculum in a trade, an employer can credit the student entering its



apprenticeship training program with coursework already completed. This value-added curriculum is a tuition cost benefit to both the incoming apprentice student and the employer.

S.B.280 outlines more expansive outreach and promotion of the apprenticeship model through increased resource allocations for staffing, education, assistance and monitoring of program, improved modernized technology, state to state reciprocity for apprentices where appropriate, and the facilitation of services between federal and state agencies and local communities with the Apprenticeship Commission serving as a single point of contact.

On many jobs, apprentice wages provide for an economic advantage, providing quality work and learning experience as the apprentice trains under the supervision of an experienced journeyman.

This restructuring of the State apprenticeship training program by abolishing the State and Apprenticeship Training Council and establishing the State Apprenticeship and Training Commission to follow the federal training program guidelines, eliminates duplicate services between state and federal programming. By unifying and leveling the hiring, training and ratio playing field and incorporating federal guidelines, the S.B. 280 promotes equality of opportunity in workforce development of the trades.

Respectfully Submitted, George F. Hayden, President, George J Hayden, Inc.