



July 18, 2023

Senator Pat D. Jehlen, Chair
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Massachusetts State House, Room 424
Boston, MA, 02133

Representative Josh S. Cutler, Chair
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Massachusetts State House, Room 472
Boston, MA, 02133

Dear Chair Jehlen, Chair Cutler, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of H.1857, *An Act relative to apprenticeship standards* filed by Representative Cutler.

The Massachusetts Business Roundtable is a public policy organization comprised of Chief Executive Officers and Senior Executives from some of the state's largest employers representing over 250,000 Massachusetts employees. The mission of the Roundtable is to make Massachusetts the most desirable place to live, work, and do business by engaging private sector executives and public leaders to ensure access to a robust, diverse, and talented workforce that enhances the Commonwealth's competitiveness in a global economy.

Last year, the Roundtable developed a policy framework "[A Talent Agenda to Drive Massachusetts' Competitiveness](#)" focused on talent in three pillars: (1) talent recruitment and retention; (2) talent development; and (3) talent diversity. Within the Talent Diversity Pillar, we highlighted the need for employers, government, workforce training providers, and others to continue a commitment to creating diverse talent pipelines in regions across the Commonwealth.

To continue this work, the Roundtable partners with many coalitions and stakeholders, including the [Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network](#), a network of employers, training

providers, and talent sources that the Roundtable helped to launch in 2022 along with the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and Accenture.

Bill H.1857 would make some necessary changes to existing law to ensure the apprenticeship model can continue to expand to non-traditional industries, with an important focus on diversifying our labor force by creating more career paths for underrepresented populations. It would also modernize the public apprenticeship system to ensure it can continue to attract more employers and be accessible and user friendly. Finally, the legislation would add a representative from the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Network to the Apprenticeship Council to help the Division of Apprenticeship Standards remain up to date on industry trends and ensure that the department and industry can scale together as the apprenticeship model grows in the Commonwealth. As such, this legislation supports the Roundtable's efforts under our Talent Diversity Pillar.

Meeting the workforce challenges of today and tomorrow will take creative solutions, like expanding apprenticeship, and a collective will to ensure that Massachusetts continues to have the diverse talent pipeline that employers throughout the Commonwealth need to grow and thrive. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.1857.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Mettlach', written in a cursive style.

Tonja Mettlach
Executive Vice President
Massachusetts Business Roundtable