



**June 4, 2020**

**To: Ohio House of Representatives Economic and Workforce Development Chair Paul Zeltwanger**

**From: Beth Lear, Vice President of Government Affairs Associated Builders and Contractors of Ohio**

**Re: House Bill 258**

Chair Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobelcki and Representatives of the Committee, I am Beth Lear, Vice President of Government Affairs for Ohio's Associated Builders and Contractors. Our members support House Bill 258, which would "Grant an occupational license to those completing apprenticeship."

This legislation was a great idea a year ago when your committee first heard Representative Powell explain its benefits. Today, in the era of COVID-19 and growing unemployment, passage of this bill will not only benefit Ohio's apprentices, it will support the restoration of Ohio's economy.

HB 258 costs government nothing, will add to the coffers of the licensing entities and will save employees and employers time and money. It wisely uses registered apprenticeship programs – already state and federally recognized – as the basis for occupational licensing, replacing additional and costly hoops for state-mandated training that is often better performed by the various existing apprenticeship programs.

Associated Builders and Contractors have offered training for prospective tradesmen and women since 1960, receiving our first federal certification only two years later. For more than half a century ABC members have trained their own masons, electricians, plumbers, HVAC technicians and all other construction positions to work in year-round positions.

Merit and union shop training has been proven safe and effective. With the passage of HB 258, the recognition of our quality instruction will go even further and help increase the number of skilled construction workers, and other industry apprentices, at a time when our economy will most need them.

On behalf of the hundreds of ABC members across Ohio and the thousands of our tradesmen and women who will benefit, and on behalf of the economy that will profit from the elimination of duplicative and overly burdensome licensing requirements, I encourage you to favorably pass House Bill 258.

Thank you for your time.