



TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

**HOUSE BILL 548 -- CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION --
TRAINING IN SOFT BUSINESS SKILLS**

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GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support

House Bill 548 -- Career and Technology Education -- Training in Soft Business Skills would require public school career and technology education (CTE) programs to include training in soft business skills.

Research conducted by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation, and Stanford Research Center has concluded that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft and people skills, and only 15% of job success comes from technical skills and knowledge (hard skills).

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports the inclusion of soft skill training not only for CTE students, but for all Maryland students. Soft skills are vitally important for students in any career field.

The GBC recommends defining soft skills using a commonly accepted definition, such as that found in curriculum for soft skills such as "Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success," a curriculum for teaching soft skills. This curriculum was developed by the U.S. Department of Labor and focuses on teaching "soft" or workforce readiness skills to youth ages 14 to 21, including youth with disabilities. The basic structure of the program is comprised of modular, hands-on, engaging activities directed at six key skill areas: communication, enthusiasm and attitude, teamwork, networking, problem solving and critical thinking, and professionalism.

The GBC published *Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, a report that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth. House Bill 548 is consistent with one of the key pillars of economic growth and job creation:

Workforce that is highly-educated and meets Maryland's business needs. Maryland's secondary and higher education institutions must offer access to quality instruction at all levels and cultivate a workforce that is well-suited to a modern economy and to the specific needs of Maryland's business sectors.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on House Bill 548.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 64-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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