

Testimony of Roger P. Manno, Esq.  
Bill 35-21: Support with Amendment

Honorable Members of the Government Operations Committee and the County Council:

Please accept this testimony in strong support of Bill 35-21, Prevailing Wage Requirements – Construction Contracts – Amendments, along with Council President Hucker’s technical amendment to clarify the definition of Mechanical Service Contracts, and to align the bill to the federal McNamara-O’Hara Service Contract Act of 1965.

This legislation is a timely and powerful wage, local hiring, and economic driver, at a time when our county needs it most.

I was privileged to serve in the Maryland House of Delegates from 2007-2011, and the Maryland Senate from 2011-2019. During that time, I authored a number of bills, laws and an Executive Order to advance prevailing wages and exceptional workforce training through certified apprenticeship training programs. Testimony and studies introduced in those legislative hearings illuminated the powerful impact of prevailing wage programs in advancing local job creation through rigorous skills-training programs, funded directly by those wages. In fact, the Senate Taskforce on Prevailing Wage in Maryland reviewed data compiled by the State Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation between 2012 and 2013, which revealed that a staggering 76.34% of all jobs created by prevailing wage contracts went directly to Maryland workers.

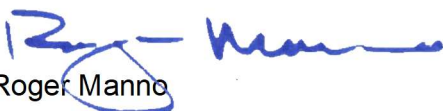
In addition, as detailed in the policy brief in your packet by national construction policy expert, attorney Gerard M. Waites of O’Donoghue & O’Donoghue LLP, some 39 studies on prevailing wages overwhelmingly indicate that prevailing wage programs increase local skills training programs, stabilize wage rates, increase productivity and jobsite safety, provide necessary stimulus in the form of local tax revenues, and do not increase overall construction project costs.

Councilmembers, by aligning the Montgomery County prevailing wage threshold to the state threshold (which is also the threshold in the recently passed Anne Arundel County prevailing wage legislation), Bill 35-21 harmonizes our regional prevailing wage rates, while incentivizing good jobs and outstanding workforce training for local residents.

Lastly, by expanding the scope of the program to mechanical service contracts, Bill 35-21 simplifies our county procurement program for all construction and construction systems-related service work, and aligns our mechanical service contract work with the federal McNamara-O’Hara Service Contract Act of 1965.

For the forgoing reasons, I respectfully ask for your support of Bill 35-21, along with Council President Hucker’s technical amendment.

Sincerely at your service,

  
Roger Manno