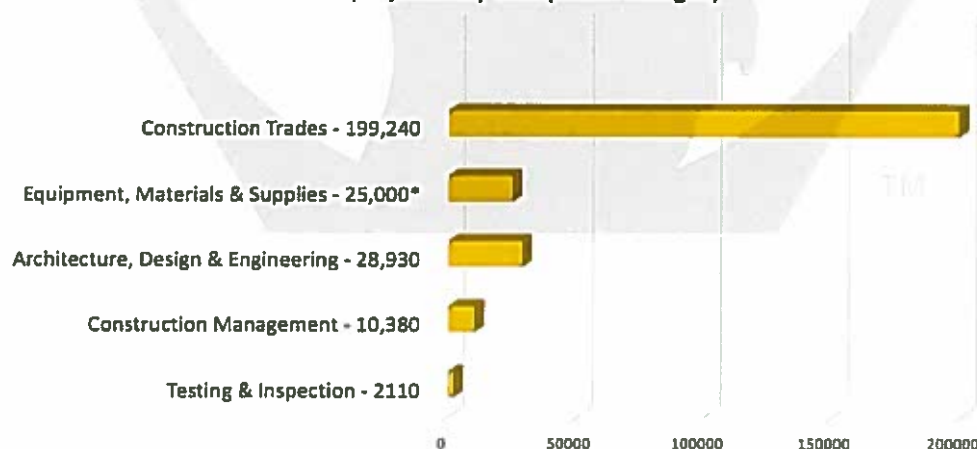


TESTIMONY**Workforce and Talent Development Committee**October, 31st, 2017

Good morning Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the committee. My name is Brindley Byrd. I am executive director of the Michigan Construction Foundation. MCF is a 501(c)(3) employer driven nonprofit created in 2015 with the mission to help more people get good paying jobs in Michigan's construction industry. We advocate for careers throughout the entire construction supply chain, in all sectors and the many occupations that make up the world of construction. Thank you for this opportunity to be speak during a very exciting time for Michigan's future.

I am here today to speak in support of the package of bills before you.

MCF engages with many companies and organizations to inspire people to want to work in our industry. Believe me, we know how complicated construction is. Last week I provided the committee with copies of our first industry report "Michigan's Construction Industry: By the Numbers". In it we organized the industry into 4 industry sectors and 5 occupation categories to then be able to help understand each categories' talent needs. You can see below a chart I pulled from the report showing 265,000 people work in the industry with almost 30,000 establishments. Approximately 200,000 people work in what we call the 'construction trades'.

Employment by Occupation Category

*Note: MCF Estimate

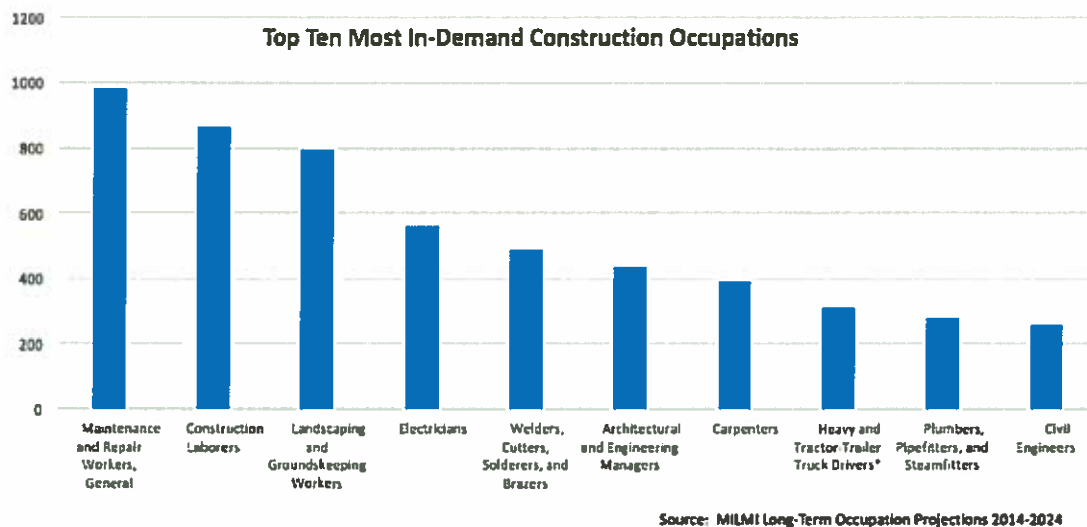
Source: MI DTMB LMISI Occupational Employment Statistics

It is hard to find the many pathways and access points to all these occupations. Training and education requirements vary widely in construction. From a career development perspective, Michigan's construction industry takes some time to figure out, let alone teach to others.

HB5139 creates a doorway for the meaningful classroom conversations about careers. Creating a framework to help simplify complex industries is a great start. Embedding career information into core curriculum will help engage students with that day's lesson plan. State level collaboratives, like MyBrightFuture and the Michigan Career Pathways Alliance, can help local districts better engage local employers. You can bet there is a construction employer in every district in the state ready to help.

Carrying these career connections through to the teachers is very important. HB5145 gives teachers a choice on how best to use their valuable time. To satisfy their CE requirement, they can take another boring CEU course or they could spend day working with a local concrete contractor! Them choosing to roll up their shirt sleeves and push some mud around, or spend the day working with a concrete testing technician, or a civil engineer will then give them better understanding of applied volumetric calculations, and the world of work that is construction. Educator externships can lead to some real connections to curriculum inside the classroom for students.

As a follow up to our first report, we have recently assembled a Michigan construction worker forecast. Our full report is not quite ready yet, but I can say our initial findings are rather sobering. We looked deeply into the most current occupation projection data issued by the Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives (LMI) and found that Michigan will need more than 9,000 new workers each year through 2024. You can see in the chart below the Top Ten Most In-Demand Construction Occupations. Maintenance and Repair, Construction Laborers, Landscaping and Groundskeepers, Electricians and Welders round out the top five. Two professional occupations make the top ten with Architects and Engineering Managers along with Civil Engineers both showing substantial annual average openings. Construction transportation drivers also make the top ten.



The first question we immediately asked with this finding was, “How will all these people get educated?”
The next question we asked was, “Where will we get the teachers to teach these programs?”

The LMI data actually projects and decrease in CTE instructors both in the middle and high school levels (-4.9% and -8.4% respectively). But, enrollment in high-school construction trades programs has increased for three years running as shown in the chart below.

The 2013/14 school year had 6210 students according to the Michigan Career and Technical Education Information System. Three years later it was 7014. We have some serious work to do to get back to pre-recession enrollment numbers in construction trades of 12,358 in 2010/11.

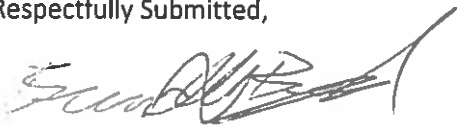


HB5141 allows for otherwise fully qualified individuals to fill badly needed CTE instructor positions. I, myself have been adjunct faculty at two of Michigan's community colleges teaching construction management courses. There was no instructor certification required of me to teach these classes. My industry experience is all that was necessary. Waiving the requirement of advanced college degrees to teach high school level CTE programs will entice a 30-year veteran of an industry to give back in the most meaningful of ways. This bill will expand the CTE instructor pool with individuals truly expert in their industry.

Mr. Chairman, with that I thank you for the time and again for this opportunity to speak.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brindley Byrd', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brindley Byrd
Executive Director
(517) 331-2331
brindley@michiganconstruction.com