

## Apprentice bill deserves swift passage

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Legislation now before the House deserves swift consideration and passage.

The topic is manufacturing workforce development, and the Senate-passed bill establishes incentives for employers to hire apprentices.

The continuing demographic tsunami that is baby boomer retirement has created a need for workers in many manufacturing businesses. But training the next generation is proving to be a challenge. This widely supported incentive takes

some of the sting out of the process for employers in need of new and appropriately trained workers.

In some industries, union contracts required a certain amount of apprentices. But in many modern-day manufacturers, the employer that trains young workers takes a risk that once the training is complete, the newly minted journeyman will go elsewhere.

The incentives will help ameliorate that risk. It is a wise expenditure of public funds and an investment in the state's future. •