

To: Commerce and Economic Development Senate Committee  
From: Morgan Diamond, Young Invincibles, [morgan.diamond@younginvincibles.org](mailto:morgan.diamond@younginvincibles.org)  
Re: Diversity in Labor Unions, Building Trades and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs Senate Hearing  
Date: October 29, 2020  
Time: 1:00pm

Young Invincibles, a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding economic opportunity for young adults, is a strong advocate for quality apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeships' earn-and-learn model is an ideal option for jobseekers who cannot afford to suspend earning opportunities while pursuing job training or higher education. Illinois apprenticeship programs can provide thousands of jobseekers the opportunity to pursue debt-free career pathways to family-sustaining jobs. **However, for apprenticeships to be truly equitable, our state must address the barriers that prevent marginalized jobseekers from thriving in these careers. High child care, housing and transportation costs, school fees and tuition, and job related equipment can all serve as obstacles to otherwise talented workers completing apprenticeship opportunities. To mitigate this, we recommend dedicating state dollars to a barrier reduction fund that can offset the costs that impede success.** For more details on what this fund could look like, visit, [https://younginvincibles.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/YI\\_ClosingTheDivide.pdf](https://younginvincibles.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/YI_ClosingTheDivide.pdf).