



Shaping Tomorrow's Global Built Environment Today

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ASHRAE Society President, 2026-2027

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September 11, 2026

The Honorable Lynda Schlegel Culver
Senate Education Committee
Pennsylvania State Capitol
501 N. 3rd St.,
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chair Culver and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing on behalf of ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers. We are a professional and technical society of more than 55,000 members dedicated to workforce development, indoor air quality, and resiliency in the built environment. Through our Society's research, standards writing, publishing, certification, and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today. As one of the leading organizations furthering building science, and on behalf of nearly 1,600 members in the state of Pennsylvania, we wish to convey our support for the goals of Senate Bill 1380.

SB 1380 would create and support a program to provide grants to students working toward a two- or four-year degree program that provides instruction in one of 16 skilled trades fields. These \$5,000 grants would be available annually to qualifying students for up to four years. To support this new spending, the legislation would introduce a "trade career-incentive tax credit." Akin to Pennsylvania's Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program, the credit would incentivize private-sector engagement with the program by offering businesses a credit in return for a contribution.

The legislation simultaneously enables upward mobility for Pennsylvanians and addresses pressing workforce challenges. By providing financial assistance to students pursuing two- and four-year degrees, SB 1380 would empower a variety of workers. Young people entering the trades or building on skills with an associates degree would benefit, as would a mid-career professional who wants to leverage hands-on experience toward a degree in engineering or building sciences. Further, providing for career advancement to allow a tradesperson to pursue a relevant four-year degree will grow the pipeline of Professional Engineer licenseholders in the state.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Pennsylvania ranks fifth out of the 50 states in employment of HVAC&R mechanics and installers and mechanical engineers.¹ In Pennsylvania, employment in these fields is expected to grow by 6.4% and 9.8%, respectively, between 2024 and 2034.² Additionally, according to a recent national study on skilled trades jobs, there are about three job openings for every person

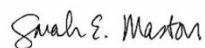
¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "49-9021: Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers," Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, accessed Sept. 1, 2026, https://data.bls.gov/oesprofile/?major_group=490000&occupation=499021&measure=01&areas=INDUSTRY,STATE,MSA.

² Projections Central, "Long-Term Occupational Projections," accessed Sept. 1, 2026, <https://projectionscentral.org/longterm>.

who completes a relevant training program.³ Demand for these workers is growing, and public investment is needed to meet the moment.

In summary, SB 1380 would help Pennsylvania address a workforce shortage while providing vital support to both early- and mid-career skilled trades workers. On behalf of ASHRAE's 55,000 global members and nearly 1,600 in your state, we appreciate your consideration of these comments. Please let us know if ASHRAE can expand on any of these points or be of further technical assistance by contacting me or having your staff reach out to GovAffairs@ashrae.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah E. Maston".

Sarah E. Maston, P.E.

ASHRAE Society President, 2026-2027

³ Lightcast, "Defining the Skilled Trades: A Data-Driven Blueprint for the Future," accessed Sept. 1 2026, https://www.datocms-assets.com/198200/1787349862-lightcast_defining_skilled_trades_aug.pdf