Chapter 581

(House Bill 658)

AN ACT concerning

**Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup
(Making It in Maryland)**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Workgroup; prohibiting a member of the Workgroup from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Workgroup to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters relating to the State's current and future workforce and emerging digital economy; requiring the Workgroup to submit an interim report and a final report to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before certain dates; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy.

Preamble

WHEREAS, The world now stands on the cusp of a technological revolution in artificial intelligence, robotics, and other advanced digital technologies that may prove as transformative for economic growth and human potential as were electrification, mass production, and electronic telecommunications in their eras; and

WHEREAS, Because of the unforeseeable and global outbreak of the COVID–19 public health emergency, this technological transformation rapidly came to fruition without adequate preparedness, exposing our economy's vulnerabilities on an unprecedented scale; and

WHEREAS, In this new era of COVID–19, there is an imperative for the State to respond to this global digital technology transformation that is occurring within the manufacturing industry; and

WHEREAS, There is a required transformation within the workforce to ensure that diverse labor has the capabilities and confidence to work alongside new technologies and thrive in a digitized workplace; and

WHEREAS, In response, manufacturers will need to partner with industry leaders, education stakeholders, and State representatives to identify digital and related technologies impacting transformation, explore work skills and needed retraining of the labor force, and employ viable and innovative solutions to support manufacturers' transformation into the new digital economy; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a)   There is a Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy.

(b)   The Workgroup consists of the following members:

(1)   two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(2)   two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3)   the Secretary of Information Technology, or the Secretary's designee;

(4)   the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's designee;

(5)   the Secretary of Labor, or the Secretary's designee;

(6)   one member of the Maryland Manufacturing Advisory Board (MMAB), designated by the chair of MMAB;

(7)   one representative of the Regional Manufacturing Institute of Maryland (RMI), designated by the President of RMI;

(8)   one representative of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), designated by the Executive Director of MACC;

(9)   one representative of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA), designated by the President of MICUA;

(10)   one representative of the University System of Maryland (USM), designated by the Chancellor of USM;

(11)   one representative of the Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MD MEP), designated by the Executive Director of MD MEP;

(12)   one representative of the Regional Additive Manufacturing Partnership of Maryland (RAMP MD), designated by the Executive Director of RAMP MD;

(13)   one representative of the Maryland Tech Council (MTC), designated by the Chief Executive Officer of MTC;

(14)   one representative of the Fraunhofer Center Mid–Atlantic, designated by the President of Fraunhofer USA;

(15)   one representative of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL–CIO, designated by the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL–CIO; ~~and~~

(16)   four representatives from manufacturing companies currently in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation for the last 5 years, designated by the Board of Directors of RMI_;_

(17)   one representative from a small, minority–owned manufacturing business currently in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation, designated by the Board of Directors of RMI;

(18)   one representative of the Printing & Graphics Association MidAtlantic (PGAMA), designated by the Chairman of PGAMA; and

(19)   one representative of the Maryland Small Business Development Center.

(c)   The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall jointly designate the chair and vice chair of the Workgroup from among the members appointed by the President and the Speaker.

(d)   The Department of ~~Legislative Services~~ Commerce shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

(e)   A member of the Workgroup:

(1)   may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

(2)   is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f)   The Workgroup shall:

(1)   identify the new and emerging digital technologies that are shaping the work of the future, the education and skills needed, and the viable strategies for businesses to adopt these technologies;

(2)   examine the research conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on the relationships between emerging technologies and the workforce to enable a future of shared prosperity, entitled "The Work of the Future: Shaping Technology & Institutions", MIT Work of the Future, Fall 2019 Report;

(3)   examine existing financial resources available to manufacturers seeking to invest in Industry 4.0 technology;

(4)   make recommendations to facilitate the State's robust entry into Industry 4.0 technology to improve the perception of manufacturing careers, including:

(i)   promoting the technological advancements of Industry 4.0 to shift the perception of manufacturing careers for the entry–level workforce; and

(ii)   creating and advancing public–private partnerships between manufacturers, supportive community stakeholders, and education systems;

(5)   examine new and viable tax credits and programs for manufacturers to be more competitive and marketable in the new digital economy;

(6)   examine the State's current statutory and regulatory authority over manufacturing to examine potential reforms to attract new manufacturing businesses brought by Industry 4.0 to invest in the State's economy and workforce;

(7)   recommend additional financial support delivery mechanisms, as needed, to enable State manufacturers to adopt Industry 4.0 technology and enhance the ability of industry service providers to increase the scope of their industry support;

(8)   propose annual State funding to create a statewide training program to address the growing skills gap in the manufacturing workforce; and

(9)   develop recommendations for long–term private–public partnerships between educational institutions and manufacturers to develop curriculums that address the rapidly changing needs of the manufacturing industry.

(g)   On or before December 1, 2021, the Workgroup shall submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

(h)   On or before December 1, 2022, the Workgroup shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2021. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2023, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 30, 2021.