



**MARYLAND**  
Chamber of Commerce

**LEGISLATIVE POSITION:**

**Favorable**

**Senate Bill 453**

**Economic Development – Maryland Makerspace Initiative Program**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**Tuesday, February 15, 2022**

Dear Chairwoman Kelley and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 5,500 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic recovery and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

At the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, we support an educational and vocational ecosystem focused on developing, retaining, and attracting a more globally competitive workforce. We believe in strategies that seamlessly link education and workforce development and embed skills-based learning into academic instruction. We strongly believe that communities throughout Maryland can reap significant benefits by building makerspaces, especially in this incredibly tight labor market.

SB 453 would create a non-lapsing fund that would be administered by TEDCO to support the expansion and establishment of makerspaces throughout the State. It is estimated that this will produce \$45 million in annual economic impact and 600 jobs through direct employment and startup creation. Increasing the number of locations of makerspaces would also educate 6,700 adults and 850 youth annually. This will create a pipeline of skilled workers for manufacturers and tech companies across the state and allow us to compete with our neighbors. Lastly, this would provide Open Works with the opportunity to organize a civil manufacturing reserve to provide supply chain resilience which would ensure economic stability in the case of a pandemic or natural disaster.

This legislation helps to bring Maryland into a national leadership role in cultivating an innovation economy and ensure the next 25 years are filled with economic growth, workforce development, and disaster preparedness. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **favorable report** on **SB 453**.

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