



City of  
**Salisbury**  
Jacob R. Day, Mayor

30 March 2022

**Committees:** Ways & Means

**Testimony on:** SB 453 – Maryland Makerspace Initiative Program

**Position:** Favorable

**RE: Support For SB 453 – Economic Development – Maryland Makerspace Initiative Program**

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

As you consider the merits of **SB 453**, I ask that you vote to give this legislation a **Favorable** Committee report.

Salisbury is well known as the Capital of the Eastern Shore. Home to TidalHealth, Perdue Farms, Chesapeake Shipbuilding, and Salisbury University, we are the Shore's foremost economic engine. Sharing in the success of local resources such as Salisbury University's Rommel Center for Entrepreneurship, our residents and employers alike recognize the inherent value a technical education can provide.

In addition to fostering a culture of innovative excellence, our City partners with local business and education leaders to solve real issues affecting our communities. When we learned that small businesses were struggling to procure personal protective equipment during the height of the pandemic, we partnered with M4Reactor, a local makerspace, to manufacture acrylic shields for local businesses. In response to the attention and community support this project garnered in its first round, thanks to the City's partnership with M4Reactor and with CDBG-CV funding provided by HUD, we were able to announce a second round of funding for PPE acrylic barriers. This partnership between the City and M4Reactor was a wonderful opportunity to leverage our relationship with a local makerspace to quickly respond to a community need.

The City of Salisbury strongly believes that other communities in Maryland can derive similar benefits by building makerspaces, especially as communities struggle to dig out of the interlocking economic, educational, and health crises triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. As we work to create jobs in the manufacturing sector which lost 5.5 million jobs between 2000 and 2017 according to BLS data, we recognize not only the inherent value of a technical education but the real-world impact of these jobs, which serve to help dismantle patterns of poverty. Following Chesapeake Shipbuilding's recent announcement that they will be building twelve new passenger ships for American Cruise Lines, the company announced that they intend to double the size of their workforce to meet this increase in demand. Celebrating the success of local companies such as Chesapeake Shipbuilding, our need for skilled technical and manufacturing jobs has never been greater; embracing makerspaces such as those supported by SB 453 would allow us to better connect with community members of all ages, whether they are interested in pursuing a career in manufacturing or simply embracing a new hobby.

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Further, creating a network of public makerspaces will scale additional operational efficiencies and funding opportunities. The proposed legislation creates a non-lapsing fund to be administered by TEDCO that would support the expansion and establishment of additional makerspaces in the State of Maryland, significantly scaling the current impacts of Open Works' current location.

Constructing a makerspace network would help to catapult Maryland into a national leadership role by cultivating an innovation economy, which would have profound implications fostering economic growth, workforce development, STEM educational excellence, disaster preparedness, and startup activity.

I ask for your support of this legislation and request that you pass **SB 453** out of Committee with a **FAVORABLE** report.

Respectfully,



Jacob R. Day  
Mayor