

SENATE BILL 867

C8

6lr3214

By: **Senator A. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Economic Development – Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission –**
3 **Alterations**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the purpose of the Maryland Aerospace and Technology
5 Commission by promoting innovation in space science, space technology, and
6 aeronautics; altering the membership, duties, and staff responsibilities of the
7 Commission; requiring the Commission to appoint an Executive Director;
8 authorizing the Commission to provide grants to certain entities for certain
9 purposes; and generally relating to the Maryland Aerospace and Technology
10 Commission.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Economic Development
13 Section 5–2601, 5–2602, 5–2603(a) and (d), 5–2604, 5–2605, and 5–2608(a)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
17 Article – Economic Development
18 Section 5–2603(b) and (c)
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
22 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

23 **Article – Economic Development**

24 5–2601.

25 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(b) “Commission” means the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission.

(c) **“ELIGIBLE ENTITY” MEANS:**

(1) A BUSINESS OR NONPROFIT ENTITY INVOLVED IN AEROSPACE-RELATED TECHNOLOGIES;

(2) A GOVERNMENT ENTITY; OR

(3) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION THAT CONDUCTS AEROSPACE RESEARCH WITHIN THE STATE.

(D) “Institution of higher education” means an educational institution in the State that:

(1) by law or charter:

(i) is a public or nonprofit educational institution; and

(ii) is authorized to provide:

1. a program of education beyond the high school level and award a bachelor’s or advanced degree; or

2. a program of 2 or more years’ duration that is accepted for full credit toward a bachelor’s degree; and

(2) meets the standards and regulations that the Maryland Higher Education Commission prescribes and is authorized to issue a certificate, diploma, or degree under Title 12 of the Education Article.

[(d)] (E) “Zone” means an aerospace and technology zone designated under § 5–2607 of this subtitle.

5–2602.

(a) There is a Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission in the Department.

(b) The purpose of the Commission is to promote innovation in the fields of space exploration, **SPACE SCIENCE, SPACE TECHNOLOGY, AERONAUTICS**, and commercial aerospace opportunities, including the integration of space, aeronautics, and aviation industries into the economy of the State.

5–2603.

(a) The Commission consists of the following members:

(1) the Secretary, or the Secretary's designee;

(2) a member of the Senate **FROM EACH DESIGNATED AEROSPACE ZONE**, appointed by the President of the Senate, who shall serve as [an] ex officio nonvoting [member] **MEMBERS**;

(3) a member of the House of Delegates **FROM EACH DESIGNATED AEROSPACE ZONE**, appointed by the Speaker of the House, who shall serve as [an] ex officio nonvoting [member] **MEMBERS**;

(4) the Director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Space Flight Center, or the Director's designee, who shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member;

(5) the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or the Administrator's designee, who shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member;

(6) the Director of the [Federal Bureau of Investigation] **NAVAL CENTER FOR SPACE TECHNOLOGY OF THE NAVAL RESEARCH LAB**, or the Director's designee, who shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member;

(7) the [president of the Goddard Contractors' Association] **CHAIR OF THE MARYLAND AEROSPACE ALLIANCE**, or the [president's] **CHAIR'S** designee;

(8) the President of the University of Maryland Baltimore County, or the President's designee;

(9) the President of the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance, or the President's designee;

(10) **THE COMMAND MASTER CHIEF OF NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER, OR THE MASTER CHIEF'S DESIGNEE, WHO SHALL SERVE AS AN EX OFFICIO NONVOTING MEMBER**;

(11) the president of the Maryland Space Business Roundtable, or the president's designee;

[(11)] (12) the President of the University of Maryland, College Park, or the President's designee;

[(12)] (13) the director of the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, or the director's designee;

1 ~~[(13)]~~ **(14)** the director of the Association of Universities for Research in
2 Astronomy, or the director's designee;

3 ~~[(14)]~~ **(15)** the director of the Space Telescope Science Institute, or the
4 director's designee;

5 **(16) THE DIRECTOR OF THE MARYLAND SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM,**
6 **OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE;**

7 **(17) THE CHAIR OF THE MARYLAND AVIATION COMMISSION, OR THE**
8 **CHAIR'S DESIGNEE, WHO SHALL SERVE AS AN EX OFFICIO NONVOTING MEMBER;**

9 **(18) THE CHAIR OF THE MARYLAND ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY**
10 **COUNCIL, OR THE CHAIR'S DESIGNEE, WHO SHALL SERVE AS AN EX OFFICIO**
11 **NONVOTING MEMBER;**

12 **(19) THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF MARYLAND TECHNOLOGY**
13 **DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TEDCO), OR THE CHIEF'S DESIGNEE;**

14 **(20) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MARYLAND ECONOMIC**
15 **DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MEDCO), OR THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE; and**

16 ~~[(15)]~~ **(21)** the following members, appointed by the Governor with the
17 advice and consent of the Senate:

18 (i) a representative of institutions of higher education;

19 (ii) **[a] AN AEROSPACE** representative of the National Society of
20 Black Engineers;

21 (iii) a representative of the Maryland aerospace manufacturing
22 community; **[and]**

23 (iv) **[a representative] UP TO THREE REPRESENTATIVES** of the
24 aerospace technology industry; **AND**

25 **(V) UP TO THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMERCIAL**
26 **SPACE INDUSTRY.**

27 (b) A member of the Commission:

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

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

(c) The Commission and its members are subject to the Maryland Public Ethics Law.

(d) (1) The term of an appointed member is 4 years.

(2) The terms of the appointed members are staggered as required by the terms provided for members on October 1, [2024] **2026**.

(3) At the end of a term, a member continues to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

(4) A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the rest of the term until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

5–2604.

(A) (1) SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNOR, THE COMMISSION SHALL APPOINT AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

(2) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SERVES AT THE PLEASURE OF THE COMMISSION.

(3) THE COMMISSION SHALL DETERMINE THE SALARY OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

(B) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE, SHALL:

(1) SERVE AS THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE COMMISSION;

(2) MANAGE THE ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THAT THE COMMISSION ESTABLISHES;

(3) MANAGE EXECUTION OF ALL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES AS CONSIDERED NECESSARY BY THE COMMISSION;

(4) ENSURE THAT GRANT PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBTITLE ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THIS SUBTITLE AND ANY REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION BEFORE THOSE PROPOSALS ARE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION;

1 **(5) APPROVE ALL SALARIES, PER DIEM PAYMENTS, AND ALLOWABLE**
2 **EXPENSES OF THE COMMISSION, THE EMPLOYEES OF THE COMMISSION, AND**
3 **CONSULTANTS OF THE COMMISSION;**

4 **(6) APPROVE ANY EXPENSES INCIDENTAL TO THE OPERATION OF THE**
5 **COMMISSION; AND**

6 **(7) PERFORM ANY OTHER DUTIES THAT THE COMMISSION DIRECTS IN**
7 **CARRYING OUT THIS SUBTITLE.**

8 **[(a)] (C) (1)** The Department shall provide staff support to the Commission.

9 **(2) THE STAFF OF THE COMMISSION SHALL:**

10 **(I) ATTEND ALL MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION;**

11 **(II) ACT AS SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION;**

12 **(III) KEEP MINUTES OF ALL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMISSION;**

13 **AND**

14 **(IV) CONNECT THE COMMISSION TO OTHER RELEVANT**
15 **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER STATE DEPARTMENTS.**

16 **[(b)] (D)** The Commission may retain consultants as necessary.

17 **5–2605.**

18 **(A)** The Commission shall:

19 (1) identify research and funding opportunities for entities in this State
20 that:

21 (i) strengthen and enhance the State’s leadership position in civil,
22 commercial, and military aerospace research and development;

23 **[(ii) integrate the aerospace industry into the economy of the State;]**

24 **(II) ATTRACT INVESTMENT INTO THE STATE’S AEROSPACE**
25 **INDUSTRY WITH AN EMPHASIS ON COMMERCIALIZATION;**

26 **(III) PROVIDE TANGIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS;**

1 ~~[(iii)]~~ **(IV)** capitalize, promote, and assist in the development **AND**
2 **TRAINING** of A **DIVERSE** workforce ~~[training]~~ to further the development of emerging
3 technologies required for all aspects of ~~[space exploration]~~ **AEROSPACE**; and

4 ~~[(iv)]~~ **(V)** develop public–private partnerships that advance both the
5 State’s aerospace industry and the surrounding community;

6 (2) establish advisory committees as needed;

7 **(3) DEVELOP POLICY PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE THE STATE’S**
8 **ATTRACTIVENESS FOR THE GROWTH OF A VIBRANT AEROSPACE INDUSTRY;**

9 ~~[(3)]~~ **(4)** develop aerospace–related educational opportunities within the
10 State in coordination with local educational institutions; and

11 ~~[(4)]~~ **(5)** develop and annually update a strategic plan developed in
12 accordance with § 5–2606 of this subtitle to implement the goals of the Commission.

13 **(B) THE COMMISSION MAY PROVIDE GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES FOR**
14 **THE PURPOSE OF:**

15 **(1) DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGING AEROSPACE–RELATED**
16 **TECHNOLOGIES;**

17 **(2) RESEARCH INVOLVING ADVANCEMENT OF AEROSPACE–RELATED**
18 **TOPICS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STRATEGIC PLAN;**

19 **(3) WORKFORCE TRAINING TO ENABLE THE EXECUTION OF THE**
20 **ADVANCEMENT OF AEROSPACE–RELATED TOPICS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE**
21 **STRATEGIC PLAN; AND**

22 **(4) DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**
23 **THAT ENHANCE THE STATE’S ABILITY TO COMPETE IN THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY.**

24 **(C) A GRANT AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH**
25 **THE STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPED BY THE COMMISSION.**

26 **(D) THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH:**

27 **(1) A COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS;**

28 **(2) CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES FOR MAKING GRANT AWARDS,**
29 **INCLUDING PRIVATE LEVERAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT AWARDS; AND**

1 **(3) PROCESSES AND METRICS FOR MONITORING THE SUCCESS AND**
2 **IMPACT OF GRANT AWARDS.**

3 **(E) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2028 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE**
4 **GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF**
5 **\$30,000,000 TO THE COMMISSION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND MAKING**
6 **GRANTS.**

7 5–2608.

8 (a) On or before [October] **JULY** 1 each year, the Commission shall submit a
9 report to the Governor, the Maryland Economic Development Commission, and, in
10 accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the terms of the initial
12 members of the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission appointed under §
13 5–2603(a)(21)(ii), (iv), and (v) of the Economic Development Article, as enacted by Section
14 1 of this Act, shall expire as follows:

15 (1) two members in 2028;

16 (2) two members in 2029; and

17 (3) two remaining members in 2030.

18 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2026.