



Mid-Atlantic Regional MBDA Advanced Manufacturing Center - Baltimore

Senate Bill 396/ House Bill 804 (as amended):
Workgroup to Study Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy
SUPPORT
House: Economic Matter Committee

March 11, 2020

Dear Chairperson Davis and Committee Members:

The Mid-Atlantic Region Minority Business Development Agency Advanced Manufacturing Center – Baltimore is a federally funded program operated by the City of Baltimore. We partner with organizations like the Regional Manufacturing Institute of Maryland to deliver services to a diverse population of manufacturers. We are one of four centers, nationwide, funded by the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), which is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce. We promote the minority manufacturing community's growth and global competitiveness, better equipping minority manufacturers to create and retain jobs, impact local economies, and compete successfully in domestic and global marketplaces.

We assist our clients and the minority manufacturing community by providing consulting services, contract and financing opportunities, bonding services, building business-to-business alliances, global/ teaming/joint venture opportunities, and executive training.

It comes with great respect that I write this letter of support for Senate Bill 369/ House Bill 804 (as amended), entitled Workgroup to Study Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy. As the Director of the Center I know our clients are seeking means on bridging the connections of qualified workers with manufacturing employers throughout the state.

New and emerging technologies are rapidly changing and modernizing the manufacturing landscape. While such technologies, including automation and artificial intelligence (AI), are becoming more prevalent, recent evidence is telling a different story that is proving to be consequential to current and future workers in today's modern manufacturing industries. Computers and the internet of things enabled a digitalization of work that made highly educated workers more productive and made less-educated workers easier to replace with machinery.

We are seeing the effects of this fourth industrial revolution on our clients. We need to ensure the legislature is looking closely at the impact of these technologies on our local economies, our small and minority businesses, our employment readiness and our state's competitiveness as the industry develops.

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Empowering a study group to understand these implications and provide advice and counsel to the legislature is a step in the right direction. I write in support of this Senate Bill 369/ House Bill 804 (as amended) and respectfully request this committee to issue a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

N. Scott Phillips

Respectfully Submitted
N. Scott Phillips
Director