



TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

**HOUSE BILL 658 – Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup
(Making It in Maryland)
Sponsor: Delegate Qi**

February 17, 2021

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support with Amendments

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 658, which would establish the Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy.

The workgroup would study the global digital technology transformation occurring within the manufacturing industry and provide suggestions for needed changes to ensure that a diverse workforce has the capabilities and confidence to work with new technologies and thrive in a digitized workplace.

In the Greater Baltimore Committee report *Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, eight core pillars were identified for a competitive business environment. An essential pillar is **government leadership that unites with business as a partner**. To maximize Maryland's economic growth potential, state leaders must set a welcoming tone that communicates positive support for business, respect for the private sector as a partner, not an adversary, and reflects a strategic plan for business growth and job creation.

The formation of this workgroup would be beneficial to that goal by having state legislators working collaboratively with business leaders to modernize and innovate the state's manufacturing industry. This partnership typifies the cooperative ventures that ultimately benefit all Marylanders.

The GBC respectfully requests the committee consider adding three members to the workgroup: a representative of the Greater Baltimore Committee, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Washington Board of Trade. The regional and statewide private sector perspective of these organizations will help to ensure the workgroup is armed with the information needed to produce its recommendations.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report with the suggested amendment on House Bill 658.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 66-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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