



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 658 – Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup
(Making It in Maryland)
House Economic Matters Committee
February 17, 2021**

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 658 – Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup (Making It in Maryland). My name is Donna S. Edwards, President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

HB 658 establishes a pathway for Maryland to rebuild our strong manufacturing base in this mercurial digital economy. The workgroup that the bill establishes is focused on realizing the unique opportunity we have, to capitalize on our strengths to grow new manufacturing businesses, create good-paying jobs in the industries, and to develop the policies to make Maryland a national leader in ensuring that the digital manufacturing jobs of the future will not simply be “another job”, but family-sustaining careers.

We have often argued that the pathway to clean energy lies through advanced manufacturing, and that Maryland can be a leader on that front. From battery technology, to solar, wind, and geothermal fabrication, there are no parts of those industries that are not firmly ensconced within the digital economy. The manufacturing jobs of the future of clean energy will be significantly concentrated in digital technology. What better way to lead on climate change in Maryland, than to produce the next generation batteries, solar panels, turbines, and geothermal systems, right here? However, in order to do this, as well as to promote and expand all other types of advanced manufacturing, we need to do the hard work of examining what the future looks like, and how we can best take advantage of the opportunities that lie before us.

Also of great importance to Maryland's economy is the fact that the creating new manufacturing jobs has a significant impact on the creation of good secondary and tertiary jobs that support the manufacturing effort. "The Multiplier Effect: There Are More Manufacturing Related Jobs Than You Think"¹, by Keith D. Nosbusch and John A. Bernaden of Rockwell Automation, demonstrates the importance of manufacturing is to our economy. An airliner for example may have 3 million components and an ordinary car as many as 10,000 coming from a vast array of suppliers. As manufactured products and processes become more complex and productive in our increasingly digitized economy, they give rise to a host of skilled paraprofessional and professionals in nonmanufacturing jobs such as logistics and transportation, customer service, technical support, regulatory and safety specialists, distribution employees trained in use of information driven tools for receiving, storing, and picking, and the list goes on and on. In some manufacturing sectors, the multiplier effect can be as high as 16 to one, or 16x, meaning that every manufacturing job supports 15 other jobs.

We must act now in the fast paced and ever-changing digital world and realize the opportunities that lie before us to create good paying, high-road careers in manufacturing in Maryland. The future is now, and it is time for Maryland's workers, businesses, and communities to seize it.

We ask for a favorable report on HB 658.

¹ https://www.wmep.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Rockwell_0312_Final.pdf