



TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Chris West

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: February 16, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 444 – *Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup (Making It in Maryland)*

Volvo Group Trucks, part of Volvo Group, is the last remaining major vehicle manufacturer in the State of Maryland following the closure of the General Motors manufacturing plant in Baltimore County in 2018. Volvo Group Trucks' impact on the Maryland economy cannot be understated: 4,645 direct and indirect jobs, \$250 million in labor income, and over \$36 million in additional state and local tax revenue have been directly or indirectly generated from Volvo Group operations in Washington County. Moreover, Volvo Group is proud to count over 1,100 of its employees as members of the Local UAW Union. Volvo Group North America supports Senate Bill 444.

Senate Bill 444 establishes the Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy and requires it to study and make recommendations regarding the State's current and future workforce and emerging digital economy. The workgroup must consist of four representatives from manufacturing companies currently in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation for the last 5 years, designated by the Board of Directors of RMI. Volvo is hopeful that if this bill is enacted into law that it will be selected as one of the manufacturing representatives.

Manufacturing workplaces are becoming increasingly digital. The jobs that we do today will no longer be the jobs that we do in the future. Volvo is preparing its workforce during this digitalization journey by implementing a digitalization program focused on providing employees with access to emerging technology training and application. The program includes four immersion week training sessions spread over nine months focusing on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, IIOT and Citizen Development. The participants will be assigned a working group, which will apply the concepts from the immersion week sessions to a Capstone project in order to add value to the business.

Moreover, Volvo is deploying PC Kiosk stations on the factory floor to allow workers to access email, read internal company news and announcements, and digitally complete attendance and contractual forms and submit them to the appropriate business function for approval. After the

deployment of the Kiosk solution, the next step will be granting each worker access to email, Microsoft Teams, and PowerApps on their personal mobile devices.

Volvo Group Trucks urges the Senate Finance Committee to give Senate Bill 444 a favorable report and looks forward to potentially serving on the Workgroup to Study the Transformation of Manufacturing in Maryland's Emerging Digital Economy. This Workgroup will be essential toward job retention and retraining, as the manufacturing workforce needs to continually adapt to future needs in a digital economy.

For more information call:

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