



Senate Bill 444/ House Bill 658

Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup (Making it in Maryland)

LETTER OF SUPPORT

Senate Finance Committee / House Economic Matters Committees

February 16, 2021/February 17, 2021

Dear Committee Chairperson and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 444 / House Bill 658, entitled *Transforming Manufacturing in a Digital Economy Workgroup (Making it in Maryland)*.

As Founder and CEO of Direct Dimensions, Inc., an over 25-year old, near 30-person, nationally recognized leader in 3D digital imaging technologies specifically for manufacturing, I know full well how digital technologies are fundamentally changing the nature of work and the technology-based job skills required throughout manufacturing.

Technology is rapidly modernizing the manufacturing landscape. Advanced technologies, such as what we do which is providing industrial 3D scanning for dimensional measurement and reverse engineering services and products – in other words – *helping manufacturers solve real world 3D problems*, is critical for the adoption and use of other emerging manufacturing technologies such as 3D printing (additive manufacturing), robotics & automation, Internet of Things (IoT), drones, and even machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI). These *Industry 4.0* movements are fast becoming more prevalent and clearly changing the way companies must think, organize, and act to remain competitive and to grow jobs in Maryland and beyond.

At Direct Dimensions, we have been evolving the use of these emerging technologies for over 25 years to help key manufacturing industries here in Maryland such as aerospace, defense, medical & consumer products, and much more. Specifically, we serve many Maryland manufactures regularly including Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Middle River Aircraft Systems, W.L. Gore, Eaton, Hardwire, Holmatro, Cobham, the JHU Applied Physics Laboratory, the US Navy at Pax River, the US Army at APG, and many more large and small Maryland manufacturing & development organizations. We are asked to provide these advanced services to these manufacturers in part because they find it challenging to keep up with this technology and to find skilled workers in these fields. Employers need workers with digital skills for many aspects of today's work environment.

Manufacturers desperately need to partner with industry leaders, education stakeholders, and others to explore new solutions to prepare Maryland's employers and workforce adequately for the future. It is for these reasons and others, why the passage of Senate Bill 444 / House Bill 658 is so critical.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Raphael
Founder and President

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