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February 21, 2023

To: Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Maryland House Ways & Means Committee and Committee Members.

From: Mike Galiazzo, Ph.D., RMI President
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Re: Support for HB 622

HB 622 is a priority recommendation by a legislative workgroup on the transformation of Maryland manufacturing led by Delegate Lily Qi. The workgroup had representatives of business education, government, and labor.

This bill supports manufacturing Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME.) Most minority and women-owned manufacturers in Maryland will benefit since they qualify as an SME. The vast majority of all manufacturing companies across the state are also SMEs.

Advanced 4.0 technologies are transforming manufacturing. If companies cannot afford to adopt 4.0 technologies, they will close down. We live in an era where technologies constantly change our world at speeds never known before. Data show that manufacturing companies globally are adopting 4.0 technologies and that there are benefits in energy efficiency, product speed to market, predictive maintenance, higher-paying jobs, and much more. The workgroup report offers greater detail and additional recommendations.

In the fall of 2022, Brooke Lierman and Senator Kathy Klausmeier met with a group of manufacturers for a meeting coordinated by RMI. Attending companies were Armel Scientifics, Baked in Baltimore, C-Care, Direct Dimensions, Fabpro Technologies, Independent Can, Lion Brothers, Magma Build Studios, Prime Manufacturing, Stanley Black & Decker, UST- United Safety Technology, and Xometry. Every manufacturer discussed their need to purchase advanced technology to remain competitive. They reported high costs to adopt Industry 4.0 technologies, quickly reaching millions of dollars. I mention this meeting because it illustrates a need that is important to the future of our state's economy.

Manufacturing is an instrument of social change because it offers well-paying jobs, and today there are many job openings. In Maryland, the average annual salary in manufacturing is in the mid-80s, not including generous benefits. Average annual wages in manufacturing increase every year due to the rise of advanced technology in manufacturing.

I respectfully request your support for HB 622.