

## **Testimony Before the House Ways and Means Committee**

Thursday, February 23, 2023

House Bill 0622: Economic Development-Industry 4.0 Technology Grant Program

### **Position: Support**

The Printing & Graphics Association Mid-Atlantic (PGAMA) respectfully supports HB622. The printing and graphics industry in Maryland encompasses roughly 16,000 employees across 500 companies and is among the largest manufacturing sectors in the state. We are in the midst of what has been dubbed the “Fourth Industrial Revolution.” Interconnectivity and automation have transformed the manufacturing sector leading to an expansion in efficiency and production through the utilization of “industry 4.0” technology. Examples of this include advanced analytics, predictive maintenance, 3D printing, smart sensors, and a whole host of others.

The printing and graphics industry has been a leader in technological modernization as we’ve transitioned from an analog to a digital world. We’ve had no choice. The challenge is that with technology advancing so rapidly, equipment is not only becoming more expensive, but has a shorter effective life span and new investment is required on an accelerated basis in order to remain competitive. This legislation will provide more opportunities for medium to small manufacturing businesses to make investments in this necessary technology.

HB622 would require the governor to include \$10 million in five successive fiscal years to fund these grants. We believe this represents a robust investment for the state, not just in the technology itself, but also the necessary training required for employees. As the economy continues to transition into the digital world, having a workforce with the necessary skills is imperative, and this funding will help ease the burden for employees on the training side as well.

**We therefore request of the committee a favorable report on HB0622**

Submitted by:

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