



**House Bill 685
Economic Development –
Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission
SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

February 13, 2024

Delegate Vanessa Atterbery, Chairman
Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401


Dear Chairman Atterbery:

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS HB 685 / SB 516 - Economic Development - Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission** which is being heard in the Ways and Means and Finance committees. The purpose of this bill is to "promote innovation in the fields of space exploration and commercial aerospace opportunities, including the integration of space, aeronautics, and aviation industries." The Commissioners of St. Mary's County support this goal, considering the prominent role the aviation and aerospace industries play in our local economy and the contributions our local industries make to the state economy as a whole.

Anchored by institutions such as Naval Air Station Patuxent River and the St. Mary's County AeroPark Innovation District, the St. Mary's County and Southern Maryland aviation and aerospace industries are significant components of the greater statewide industry. We believe the Aerospace and Technology Commission and the Maryland Aerospace Research and Space Economy Collaborative that will be established by this bill would benefit from including representatives of these institutions and their allied industry associations.

We support HB 685 / SB 516 with amendments that would secure such representation and request a favorable with amendments report. We appreciate the introduction of this legislation and believe that, with the amendments suggested, this legislation will benefit all of Maryland. We look forward to working with you on this and other initiatives throughout the session.

Sincerely,
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY


James Randy Guy, President

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Cc: Senator Jack Bailey
Delegate Todd Morgan
Delegate Matthew Morgan
Delegate Brian Crosby
Commissioner Mike Alderson, Jr.
Commissioner Eric Colvin
Commissioner Michael Hewitt
Commissioner Scott R. Ostrow
David Weiskopf, County Administrator
Chris Kaselemis, Director, Department of Economic Development
John Sterling Houser, Deputy County Attorney