



**HOUSE
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair**

February 15, 2024

TESTIMONY

**Submitted by
Dr. Falecia D. Williams, President**

House Bill 0685- Economic Development - Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission
Position: Favorable

As the President of Prince George's Community College, I support House Bill 0685- Economic Development - Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission. House Bill 0685 will serve as a catalyst for innovation, economic growth, and workforce development in the State of Maryland.

The creation of a Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission will signify a bold commitment to fostering excellence and leadership in the fields of space exploration, aeronautics, and aviation. By promoting collaboration among industry stakeholders, academia, and government agencies, this commission will harness the collective expertise and resources necessary to propel Maryland to the forefront of the aerospace and technology sectors. There are currently over five companies and agencies located in and near Prince George's County with an aerospace and technology focus. Thus, there is a growing demand and need for a coordinated effort to address the workforce demand for aerospace and technology. According to a report from the Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland is a thriving location for space exploration, satellite technology, and research. 15 of the world's top 20 aerospace and defense companies have a presence in Maryland.

Partnerships play a vital role in advancing Maryland's response to the aerospace and technology industries, exemplified through the College's collaboration with the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore (UMES), through articulation agreements, specifically around technology. Through these strategic alliances and community partnerships, we aim to be recognized as a dynamic and collaborative partner for advancing economic mobility for all students. By partnering with UMES and other institutions, the College underscores its commitment to addressing the specific needs of the aerospace and technology sectors through specialized programs and articulation agreements. These agreements facilitate seamless pathways for students to pursue higher education and career advancement in these high-growth industries. By aligning workforce development efforts with industry demands and promoting educational opportunities, Prince George's Community College contributes to the region's economic growth while ensuring that Marylanders are equipped with the skills and training necessary to thrive in these dynamic fields.



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The establishment of the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission will represent a visionary investment in Maryland's future. By fostering innovation, driving economic growth, and advancing workforce development, this initiative will position our state as a global leader in the dynamic and fast-growing fields of aerospace and technology. This legislation will benefit Marylanders, which creates a better Maryland for all.

Sincerely,

Falecia D. Williams, Ed.D.
President
Prince George's Community College