

Testimony to the House Ways and Means Committee by John D. Porcari in support of the DECADE Act of 2025.

House Bill 498

Chair Atterbeary and members of the Committee:

My name is John D. Porcari and I am a resident of Cheverly, Maryland in Prince George's County.

I have had the honor and privilege of twice serving as Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation, at the federal level as Deputy Secretary & COO of the US Department of Transportation for President Obama, and as the White House Port and Supply Chain Envoy for President Biden during the pandemic-induced supply chain crisis. Perhaps most relevant to today's hearing, I started my state service as Assistant Secretary for Economic Development Policy and Governor's Ombudsman at what was then the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development.

The purpose of my testimony today is to support Governor Moore's DECADE Act of 2025, and in particular to outline how this long-overdue comprehensive realignment of the state's economic development efforts can help position the State of Maryland to excel in a specific growth element of the innovation economy of the future: Aerospace and its Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) component.

Maryland has a storied and crucial role in the development of aviation and the aerospace industry in the United States. From the Wright brothers training the first military pilots at College Park, through Glenn Martin's pioneering world-straddling flying boats, B-26 Marauders and other military aircraft that helped America win World War II, NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab that helped us win the Space Race, and Hagerstown's Fairchild factory that produced the A-10 that redefined close air support, for over a century now Maryland's

aerospace history has been instrumental in the story of aviation in America—and across the globe. The nation that invented aviation will continue to exercise worldwide leadership with Maryland's help.

The Governor's recent Executive Order establishing an **Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) Council** sets the stage for maximizing the economic development potential of groundbreaking new technologies in every corner of the state. From electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft, to new technologies revitalizing regional air service, uncrewed aerial vehicle applications for both civilian and military uses, aeromedical AAM applications that will enable the nation's premier shock trauma medical system to continue to pioneer advances in emergency medicine, and the statewide education and job training opportunities that AAM represents, we will directly benefit from leadership across the spectrum in Advanced Aerial Mobility.

Operationalizing AAM in every corner of the state requires the comprehensive restructuring and revitalization of our economic development efforts that the DECADE Act of 2025 encompasses. Advanced Aerial Mobility can—and should be—an important pillar of a larger state economic development program. It is for these reasons that I urge the adoption of HB 498, the DECADE Act of 2025. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

John D. Porcari

3/4/25

