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March 3, 2026

Chair Pamela Beidle  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
[Pamela.beidle@senate.maryland.gov](mailto:Pamela.beidle@senate.maryland.gov)

Cc: Vice Chair Antonio Hayes, Senator Alonzo Washington, Committee Members

**RE: Support for SB 867 Economic Development - Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission - Alterations**

Madame Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Rocket Lab urges your support for SB 867 – a bill, sponsored by Senator Alonzo Washington, that would increase the reach and impact of Maryland’s Aerospace and Technology Commission (MATC). Aerospace has been identified as a lighthouse sector for economic development in Maryland and a time of critical opportunity for the state. This critical sector provides nearly 175,000 high quality jobs and drives nearly 10% (\$50B) of state GDP with over \$2B of state and local tax revenue generated.

The aerospace sector is shifting rapidly – from long reliance on government funding and contracts to a commercial model focusing on rapid innovation and technological development. As this transition unfolds, states wanting to retain aerospace businesses and affiliated jobs must also transition the way they interface with and support these businesses.

Competition to attract and retain aerospace businesses is stronger than ever. Other states and localities are moving aggressively with incentives for this high-tech industry and doing all they can to move quickly to align with the pace of the new space sector. The fastest growing segment of the space industry moves incredibly quickly with timelines the range of weeks to a few months for decisions and moving to operational status on new projects. Full satellites are built in months, not decades – and production is expected to grow exponentially in coming years, offering substantial return on investment to states that have positioned well to attract this business growth. States must move quickly to stay competitive. Just recently, in 2024, Texas invested \$150M via its Space Commission’s Space Exploration and Aeronautics Research Trust Fund (SEARF) – with an additional \$21.5M allocated in 2025 – to support space business attraction, retention and scaling. Florida’s 2026 budget also includes \$21M to support aerospace project investments. Other states like Alabama, Maryland, Virginia, Michigan, Utah have been aggressive in recent years with grants to attract space industry businesses.

Although Maryland faces current funding constraints that limit investment on the scale of the referenced states it has the advantage of a long and rich history in the sector, as well as the highest concentration of Aerospace Engineering talent in the country. These advantages are creating a strong foundation that can be leveraged by the current state government with the help of the MATC. There are critical steps and groundwork that the state can begin to lay to ensure it is well positioned to maintain and continue to grow its aerospace footprint.



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SB 867 provides critical initial bootstraps and suspenders to support the work that the MATC is doing to grow the impacts of the aerospace sector locally. We understand that Commissions for all other state lighthouse sectors have received funding support for implementation of their strategic plans for growth and impact, and it is vital that the aerospace sector receive similar support.

Providing dedicated staff support, in particular, will be critical to accelerating the work of the commission and identifying public-private partnerships that can support the Commission's goals while minimizing needs for state support.

We request your support for SB 867 and the positive impacts it will continue to bring to communities across the state.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Goodrum  
Director, State and Local Government Operations

Cedric Jacob  
Director, Space Structures Complex, Middle River

Alex Zajac  
Senior Director, Separation Systems, Silver Spring