

## Testimony in Support of SB0867

Economic Development – Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission - Alterations

Chair Pamala Beidle

Senate Finance Committee

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-841-3677

[Pamala.beidle@seante.maryland.gov](mailto:Pamala.beidle@seante.maryland.gov)

Cc: Vice Chair Antonio Hayes, Committee Members

The Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission (MATC) and the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance (SMNA) urge your support for SB 867 – Economic Development – Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission – Alterations. Sponsored by Senator Alonzo Washington, this bill would support the follow-through execution and implementation of the MATC Strategic Plan submitted to Governor Wes Moore on 1 October 2025. The purpose of the MATC is to promote economic development and innovation in the fields of space exploration, science, technology, aeronautics and commercial aerospace opportunities including the integration of space, aeronautics, and aviation industries into the economy of the State. MATC directly supports Aerospace as a designated Maryland Lighthouse Sector and is of strategic significance to the State's future. In many ways, Maryland is well positioned for growth as the relevant technologies continue to accelerate and aerospace markets expand significantly around the globe. MATC supports our economic prosperity and our ability to attract, develop and build the high technology workforce, capabilities and businesses that can foster sustained growth and innovation.

The 2025 MATC Strategic Plan entitled, "Elevating Maryland to Global Aerospace Leadership" is the result of the Committee's extensive research and strategic assessment of the State's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It includes an "As-Is" assessment and formulates a comprehensive approach to achieve a highly desired "To-Be" state with the vision of positioning Maryland to be a globally recognized leader in the rapidly evolving space and aerospace sectors. Maryland has strong roots in leading the space and aerospace sectors with its unique federal sector presence and over 9600 aerospace related businesses. However, there remains significant untapped potential. To date, there has not been a coherent and well-considered strategic approach to maximize

the economic development and technological impact of Maryland's space and aerospace sectors. The MATC Strategic Plan provides that strategic approach.

The 2025 MATC Strategic Plan was specifically designed by leading experts across the State to address this unique opportunity. We have designated well-targeted strategic thrust areas to build on Maryland's unique combination of strengths. These include formidable capabilities in: systems and systems integration capabilities, advanced materials and manufacturing, AI-driven and Quantum enabled autonomous systems research and technology, resilient navigation and command and control capabilities, and the requirement for sustained world class talent to support an end-to-end aerospace innovation pipeline.

To take full advantage of our strengths, specific strategies have been proposed that would leverage and unleash our latent potential across the State. This includes critical investments that foster collaboration, innovation, entrepreneurship and business development while attracting new businesses, making enabling connections across our geographically dispersed State, and investing in the infrastructure we need to be future-ready to compete today and well into the future. The MATC Strategic Plan recommends pursuit external sources of innovation-related investment, and has designated 5x Maryland Aerospace and Technology Zones (ATZ). These ATZs are our regional aerospace innovation clusters with various levels of existing capabilities and growth potential. With requisite support industries in these ATZs can successfully compete and meet the significantly growing market demands of the space and aerospace markets. MATC has a multi-phased approach to develop these ATZs that will build the connections and synergies between them and enable them to realize the power of cross-State collaboration, partnerships and innovative potential. This proposed legislation will enable extensive market opportunity analysis and assessments as well as knowledge sharing across the State enabling our aerospace industry to operate synergistically at the leading edge of advanced developments.

Today, emerging space and aerospace global markets include rapidly advancing technologies and disruptive innovation applications for uncrewed systems, eVTOL transportation and advanced air mobility, reusable and affordable space launch capabilities, cutting-edge advances in computing, satellite technologies and advanced manufacturing to include additive manufacturing and advanced composites. At the same time, the nature of work is transforming the workplace at an unprecedented level and pace, adopting and adapting to digital and virtual environments that enable high fidelity physics-based modeling and simulation coupled with artificial intelligence with profound implications. Industry 4.0 technologies like automation, robotics and the Industrial

Internet of Things i.e. Industry 4.0/5.0 are modernizing factory floors and transforming entire supply chains to enable firms to effectively compete. We are now seeing the emergence of “SMART Factories” and “SMART Supply Chains” which will require continuous investments and improvements keep pace with market expectations.

While these paradigm shifts are occurring, as “The Capital of Quantum” Maryland is on the cusp of applying game-changing quantum technologies across a number of aerospace and product development applications. The implication for these technologies is profound and includes next generation computing, secure communications, advanced sensing and radar technologies that will fundamentally change which and how economies will thrive in the future. Preparing our workforce at all levels for these exponentially accelerating technologies will be essential to ‘stay in the game’ and to thrive economically. Today and well into the future, change is and will be the only constant. This requires leadership and coordination to ensure requisite levels of awareness and understanding, built on a culture of learning and innovation to provide the capabilities and competencies for future success.

Maryland is extraordinarily well positioned at a unique inflection point to ride this tsunami wave of technological acceleration and transformation, and to become a well-recognized exemplar and global leader for the space and aerospace sectors. To ensure that Maryland stays out in front I wholeheartedly support SB0869. This will expand our Maryland-based aerospace coalition and provide the much needed resources to thrive – developing the technological prowess and catalyzing economic development and growth with significant benefits across our extraordinary State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

Dale Moore, Ed.D.

Chair, Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission

President, Southern Maryland Navy Alliance