MMAB MARYLAND MANUFACTURING ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, September 9, 2026
10:00 AM–11:30 AM (Scheduled)
Hybrid Meeting – Virtual & In-person
Maryland Department of Commerce
World Trade Center, 7th Floor
401 East Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes – DRAFT

Board Attendees:
April Richardson, Chair
N. Scott Phillips; Luke Chow; Kelly Koermer; Mina Izadjoo, Ph.D.; Greg Maxwell; Susan Chambers

Commerce Staff & Invited Participants:
Benjamin McGlaughlin, Manufacturing Program Manager, Maryland Department of Commerce
Kenneth Sanchez, President, Chesapeake Specialty Products
Senator Nick Charles; Delegate Denise Roberts

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

   Chair April Richardson presided over the hybrid meeting and welcomed members and invited participants. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. **Review and Acceptance of July 13, 2026, Meeting Minutes**

   The agenda provided for review and acceptance of the July 13, 2026, meeting minutes. The approval of acceptance of the minutes was moved by Susan Chambers and seconded by Greg Maxwell.

3. **Discussion – Perspective on Manufacturing Support Needs**

   Kenneth Sanchez, President of Chesapeake Specialty Products, discussed barriers to the competitiveness and growth of Maryland manufacturing. He described the erosion of local support services and supply-chain capacity, noting that manufacturers increasingly seek repair and other services outside Maryland. He emphasized the broader economic and employment benefits generated by a strong manufacturing ecosystem.

   Mr. Sanchez cited the cost of automation, inconsistent processes, and limited enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems as obstacles for small and mid-sized manufacturers. He also expressed support for the Maryland Manufacturing 4.0 Grant Program while noting a gap between current funding and the $50 million level ($10 million per year over five years) recommended by the 2022 manufacturing task force. He referred to the task force's broader legislative proposals, including manufacturing innovation centers and loan guarantees.

   Workforce discussion focused on apprenticeship complexity, difficulties tailoring programs to smaller firms, and the risk of losing trained employees to competitors. Mina Izadjoo referenced an internship program including a reported $6,000 intern bonus. Participants also discussed the ability of apprentices to change employers and distinctions between apprenticeships and tuition assistance.

   Members considered opportunities associated with artificial intelligence for near-term data analysis, automation, and performance dashboards, alongside a longer-term outlook for quantum computing. Kelly Koermer cited potential manufacturing roles in quantum-related component supply chains, including photonics and refrigeration. Chair Richardson and Mr. Sanchez also discussed the significance of food processing and textiles within the manufacturing economy.

4. **Buy Maryland Program Discussion (2025 Legislative Session)**

   Senator Nick Charles and Delegate Denise Roberts participated in discussion of ways to increase Maryland-based procurement. Senator Charles cited an estimate of approximately $11 billion in annual procurement spending in Prince George's County. Participants considered using NAICS codes to better categorize spending and identify opportunities for local suppliers.

   The discussion referenced legislative proposals including HB 95 and SB 547 and considered procurement preference points tied to measurable Maryland economic impact, such as headquarters location and employment. Participants also referenced a centralized procurement posting repository.

5. **Maryland Department of Commerce Updates**

   Benjamin McGlaughlin was scheduled to provide the Department of Commerce update. Due to time restrictions, it was determined that he would not present.

6. **Board Discussion Re: Advancing Maryland's Manufacturing Sector (Working Groups)**

   Chair Richardson reviewed the status of recommendations developed in 2022 and encouraged continued attention to their implementation. N. Scott Phillips emphasized execution of existing recommendations rather than generating additional proposals. Participants discussed local supply-chain gaps, the need for sustained state-level manufacturing priorities, and possible federal infrastructure assistance for reshoring, about which Luke Chow requested information.

   The Board discussed legislation referenced as SB 547, HB 1235, and SB 943. Chair Richardson encouraged members to examine the proposals and communicate their views directly to Senator Charles and Delegate Roberts. She explained that Board working groups may include non-Board participants, and the Board reaffirmed its role in identifying manufacturing issues and advising the Secretary of Commerce.

   Mr. McGlaughlin indicated that the Board's annual report is available on its website. The Board discussed incorporating updated industry data in the forthcoming year-end summary for the Secretary.

7. **Public Comments/Discussion**

   There was no public comment provided.

8. **Closing Remarks**

Kenneth Sanchez: Provide his presentation slides to Senator Nick Charles.

April Richardson: Provide Senator Charles and Delegate Roberts with the 2022 manufacturing recommendations and related enacted legislation; circulate the bill references HB 95, SB 547, HB 1235, and SB 943 to members.

Board members: Review the circulated proposals and share comments with the legislators.

April Richardson: Connect Luke Chow with the legislators to discuss federal reshoring-related infrastructure resources.

April Richardson and Benjamin McGlaughlin: Prepare the year-end report for the Secretary of Commerce with updated manufacturing data pending board review

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. The location is to be determined.