

ALONZO T. WASHINGTON
Legislative District 22
Prince George's County

Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 16, 2023

Testimony in Support of SB 516

Madame Chair, Madame Vice Chair, Fellow members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Senate Bill 516 is a proposal to establish the aptly named commission to promote innovation within the field to promote innovation within fields of space exploration and commercial aerospace opportunities. Additionally, the bill provides for a fund to be created to be managed under said commission to achieve the goals outlined above. Finally, the commission in question will be required to submit a report to the Governor summarizing its activities throughout a given year.

Our state runs the unacceptable risk of falling behind when it comes to the aerospace industry. While other states have poured millions of dollars into supporting one of the most noble and inspirational lines of work, our state has lagged at letting basic issues continue to plague an installation that is trying to expand the frontiers of humanity. With such a long list of complaints from those who work and benefit from the facility, Maryland must move to act on this matter.

By supporting the Aerospace and Technology Industry, Maryland will market itself as a hub for aerospace companies. Furthermore, we will be helping the dozens of subcontractor businesses in the state that are powered by the facility, and see an increase in highly skilled, high-income laborers in our state. This can be the launching point for future industry, and bring billions of dollars to our state economy, all while improving the infrastructure of an important area.

This legislation will also help bolster educational opportunities for the dozens of graduates interested in working in the air and space industries, providing ample opportunities to young dreamers who may not have had this opportunity otherwise. Students will be able to gain valuable learning experience by working with innovative technologies and will be able to push the scientific achievements of our country forward.

We must do our best to support locally beneficial enterprises that can benefit the state's economy and development for decades to come. We must reach for the stars and aim to make Maryland a hub for aerospace companies and a supporter of the small businesses that benefit from them.

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Most importantly, we can teach our youth and provide them with honorable jobs that will help us in the furtherment of human exploration. For this state, the sky is not the limit.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable committee report on SB 515.