

## Florida Manufacturing & Supply Chain Advocacy Council 2023 Advocacy Priorities

The Florida Manufacturing & Supply Chain Advocacy Council is a coalition of manufacturing industry associations across the state of Florida. Its members have agreed to support and collaborate on the below advocacy priorities for the current session. These are most important issues facing the manufacturing industry across the state.

1. **Manufacturing & Supply Chain Caucus:** Support their efforts through the following initiatives.
  - a) To promote and broaden awareness of the societal, educational, and economic benefits made possible through Florida's manufacturing sector and its attendant supply chain.
  - b) Establish better awareness and understanding of the underlying policy and regulatory issues facing Florida's advanced manufacturing sector, public and private interests impacted by Florida manufacturing, and to serve as an on-going information resource for members of the Legislature and their staff.
  - c) To exchange ideas and information with manufacturers, state and federal agencies, universities and research institutions, the State's career and technical training infrastructure, professional and institutional societies and organizations, and the Administration.
2. **Strengthen economic development initiatives** – Specifically those at the Department of Economic Opportunity, Enterprise Florida, Space Florida, FloridaMakes, CareerSource Florida, Veterans Florida, and local economic development organizations -- that promote the development, retention, and expansion of Florida's 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing economy, including defense, aviation and aerospace, life sciences including medical technology, and electronics and computer equipment, as examples.
  - a. Reestablish recurring state funds for Florida's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, FloridaMakes, to secure the federal investment by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce). The MEP program is the industrial extension equivalent to the agricultural extension investment from USDA and the State for the Institute Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension based at the University of Florida.
  - b. Reestablish the Qualified Target Industry (QTI) Tax Refund Program which creates a state grant equal to the amount paid for certain state and local taxes to eligible

businesses creating jobs in certain target industries, including advanced manufacturing.

- c. Redouble investments in programs directed toward increasing Florida's exports of high-value, high-demand manufactured goods. Expand the number and intensity of Florida's export businesses.
- d. Enable a local county option to use "Bed Tax" funds for economic development programs, which are for expanding high-wage business jobs in Florida (Florida Statutes Title XI Chapter 125.0104).

**3. Invest in training and jobs programs:** Customized training and earn-to-learn models should be an investment priority as well as, training infrastructure that targets 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and career paths while target filling high-wage, high-skill career vacancies in advanced manufacturing.

- a) Career and Technical Education: Support funding for programs like those developed by the Florida Advanced Technological Education Center which:
  - Support policies that encourage and establish vocational education at the earliest possible grade levels leading to career and technical education.
  - Establish long range viability for the manufacturing workforce and emphasize the link between education and the jobs available today as well as the future.
  - Engage students and parents early, exploring ways to provide exposure to robotics, automation, and computer programming to primary and secondary school students. Advocate for summer internship opportunities in manufacturing and logistics operations, and programs for instructors at technical high schools and community colleges. The intent is to provide educators with the experience they need to speak with students about job opportunities in these fields.
  - Build awareness and promote careers in advanced manufacturing as a high-wage, high-skill career pathway.
- b) Apprenticeship Programs: Supporting the establishment of a steady pipeline through apprenticeships will contribute to the attraction of advanced manufacturing companies. Apprenticeships are a proven training method benefitting both job seekers and businesses, leading to high-pay/high-skill careers. Support programs like:
  - Employer Apprentice Matching Fund: Quick Response OJT (On the Job Training) Fund via CareerSource Florida or Enterprise Florida.
  - Apprentice Scholarship Fund via Bright Futures to support apprentices attending state and technical colleges.

- Funding to State and Technical Colleges to support registered apprenticeship programs with industry qualified instructors and technologically advanced training equipment and lab space.
- Apprenticeship/Internship Tax Credit Programs benefiting businesses who hire apprentices/interns.

c) Workforce development: Support increased investment in the new and incumbent worker training initiatives at CareerSource Florida essential to the development and maintenance of that workforce. Continuous training and upskilling the incumbent workforce are critical to staying abreast, if not ahead, of the technology demands of the 21st century.

**4. Support Florida supply chain initiatives:** Promote initiatives that encourage use and development of local suppliers and one that contributes to developing a more robust and resilient system of supply for the state.

- a) Establish a “Buy Florida Act.” The Federal Government operates under the “Buy America Act” which requires Federal Agencies to procure products from American based companies whenever possible. States like Ohio have successfully established a similar policy to incentivize local growth. Florida has no such policy and seeks out low prices regardless of where the item is made. This initiative will promote the growth of our local companies allowing for a healthy and diverse economy.
- b) Develop a supplier tax credit. Incentives should be created for manufacturers that use Florida suppliers versus sourcing outside the state. A tax credit could be taken against corporate income taxes or as a sales tax refund and based on a percentage of purchases from Florida suppliers or the annual growth in such purchases.
- c) Support maximizing the utilization of Florida’s transportation systems including, seaports, railroads, and highways. Support initiatives to attract truck drivers and support services for movement of goods across our interstate and Highway systems. Evaluate restrictions on tractor trailers, allowing for double trailers.
- d) Continue efforts to repeal the tax imposed on commercial leases. Require counties to follow state depreciation schedules for the calculation of Tangible Personal Property Tax. The state follows the federal rules for depreciation, but counties may set their own rules. This affects manufacturing more than most businesses because of the higher cost of manufacturing equipment. Accelerated depreciation schedules are beneficial because they encourage manufacturers to invest in equipment.

**5. Strengthen the resilience of Florida’s manufacturing sector:** Investing in initiatives focused on accelerating the adoption and use of advanced digital technologies (Industry 4.0) – artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analytics, supply chain

integration, as examples – and direct those investment at increasing the productivity and technological performance of Florida’s manufacturing industry.

- a) Increase investment in university and institutional research initiatives and infrastructure, including a state-wide expansion of Florida’s High Tech Corridor-like programs directed at the advancement and application of Industry 4.0 technologies including autonomous robots, simulation, horizontal and vertical simulation, the Internet of Things (IoT), cybersecurity, cloud computing, additive manufacturing, augmented reality, and big data analytics.
- b) Increase investment in K-12, Career Academy, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) curriculum development in these advanced Industry 4.0 technologies as they relate to advancing the skills needed for 21<sup>st</sup> century manufacturing as well as the digital transformation and interconnectedness of all Florida businesses.