

## Regional Manufacturers Associations in Florida 2021 Draft Legislative Priorities

**SFMA and the 12 other Regional Manufacturers Associations in Florida have collectively agreed to support and collaborate on the below legislative priorities for the 2021 Session that elevate the issues that are most important to their manufacturing stakeholders across the state.**

- 1. Manufacturing & Supply Chain Caucus:** Establish a caucus in the Florida Legislature.
  - 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. 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) Vocational Education: 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.
  - b) Apprenticeships: 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.
  - 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 is critical to staying abreast, if not ahead, of the technology demands of the 21st century.
  - d) Developing the pipeline for careers in advanced manufacturing: Engage students and parents early, exploring ways to provide exposure to robotics, automation, and computer programming to primary and secondary school students. Build awareness and promote careers in advanced manufacturing as a high-wage, high-skill career pathway.
  
- 3. Support Florida supplier 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. (Identical recommendation by the Florida TaxWatch COVID-19 Taxpayer Task Force Recommendations).
- c) Having a sustainable, resilient supplier base is vital for the state’s economy. During the global health pandemic, in-state supplier capabilities and sourcing is critical to Florida’s response for personal protection equipment, ventilator parts, and other necessary items; however, deficiencies in the state’s supply chain is a real problem for Florida’s manufacturing sector, particularly in industries that are experiencing rapid growth, such as commercial space flight.

**4. 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.

**5. Strengthen economic development initiatives** – specifically those at the Department of Economic Opportunity, Enterprise Florida, Space 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 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.

- b. Reestablish recurring state matching 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.
- 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.