

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 781

(Senator James)

Finance

Ways and Means

**Economic Development - Regional Additive Manufacturing Partnership of
Maryland - Alterations**

This bill renames the Regional Additive Manufacturing Partnership of Maryland to be the Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership of Maryland (in both cases, RAMP MD). The RAMP MD Fund is likewise renamed. The bill makes similar changes to the purposes, membership, and duties of RAMP MD to incorporate *advanced* manufacturing instead of *additive* manufacturing. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State finances or operations, as discussed below.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government finances or operations, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapters 570 and 571 of 2014 established the Northeastern Maryland Additive Manufacturing Innovation Authority and Fund. Chapter 444 of 2016 renamed the authority and fund to be RAMP MD and the RAMP MD Fund and made other minor changes. The Department of Commerce, Cecil County Office of Economic Development, and Harford County Office of Development jointly must provide staff, office space, and operational support for RAMP MD. Harford and Cecil counties may provide funding to RAMP MD, as may the State, contingent on county funding.

The purposes of RAMP MD are to:

- foster the economic development of the region by (1) promoting collaboration among government, businesses, educational institutions, and entrepreneurs and innovators and (2) leveraging the established advanced manufacturing investments in the region; and
- position the State as a leader in advanced manufacturing.

To further the purposes of the Acts, RAMP MD must, among other things:

- foster collaborative efforts among government agencies, military installations, educational institutions, businesses, nonprofits, individuals, and other entities in the region to share resources, cooperate in the development of new products and processes, and bridge gaps between research, product development, and the commercial application of new technologies and manufacturing processes;
- facilitate the involvement of specified institutions of higher education in developing and sustaining a skilled additive manufacturing workforce through degree, certification, specialized training, and continuing education programs;
- obtain, coordinate, and disseminate marketing resources to promote and enhance additive manufacturing opportunities and investment in the region; and
- pursue federal, State, local, and other public and private funding and collaboration initiatives.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: Commerce advises that RAMP MD has historically received little to no State funding and does not have staff. The partnership has been the occasional recipient of small grants from Commerce through its economic development programs. Neither the fiscal 2024 budget as passed by the General Assembly, nor the fiscal 2025 budget as introduced, includes funding for the RAMP MD Fund. RAMP MD advises that it has similarly received minimal support from Cecil and Harford counties.

The bill does not appear to significantly alter the purpose or duties of the partnership. As such, there is no obvious expectation for State or local funding levels to change from their intermittent and minimal levels. Accordingly, the bill is not anticipated to materially affect State or local finances or operations. Any additional funding provided due to the bill would be at the discretion of the State and/or Harford and Cecil counties.

Additional Comments: For context, a well-known form of additive manufacturing is “3D printing,” which is when a machine spreads layers of plaster or resin powder in a similar fashion to an inkjet printer and then binds them together. “Advanced manufacturing” is a broader term that encompasses additive manufacturing and other types of manufacturing.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Commerce; Regional Additive Manufacturing Partnership of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 25, 2024
km/ljm Third Reader - March 15, 2024

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