

## **Business Environment Working Group**

August 18, 11:30 - 12:30pm

Zoom Conference

### **Minutes**

**In attendance:** Julie Chen, Arlene Parquette, Emily Reichert, Paul Fortier, Marie O'Malley, Carolyn Kirk, Farhad Vazehgoo, Helena Fruscio-Altman, Scott Martin, Meghan Abella-Bowen, and Michael Ferguson.

#### **Welcome and Introduction: Helena Fruscio Altman**

Helena welcomed the attendees and a roll call was taken.

#### **Approval of minutes: Helena Fruscio Altman**

April and July meeting minutes approved unanimously.

#### **Brainstorm Session: Assessing Massachusetts Business Environment for Manufacturing**

How do we make Massachusetts attractive for manufacturers? What are the areas that Massachusetts is competitive on? Where is our manufacturing base now and where do we want to see growth.

#### **Are there existing studies we would want to review?**

- Numerous studies have already been done (e.g., MassDevelopment, MassMedic, MassBIO, MassCEC, Middlesex 3, and AIM).
- Are there existing reports that we can overlay across regions?
- How can we act on the existing data?
- Need to use the data (existing or future) to make a strong case for economic development policy reform.

#### **What are the key benchmarks we should consider?**

- Cost of manufacturing – automation and labor balance
- Health Care
- Energy
- Transportation
- Regional differences across the state

#### **State by state comparisons across various supports, including regional and community level perspective:**

- Who are we competing against? New York, Connecticut, North Carolina, Ohio, New Jersey.
- Are we competing against other New England states? Impact of regions?
- Are we looking at competition through the lens of SMEs or OEMs? Should we target R&D?

- Role of supply chain. How do we connect local SMEs to OEMs? How do we capitalize on the global changes in supply chain due to the pandemic?
- Do we need to be sector specific? Should we start by identifying a few sectors? Do we evaluate priority strengths and weaknesses in each sector by region?

**Ideas for conducting an assessment:**

- Develop a strawman heat map across the state. Identify the issues for each region.

**Next Steps:**

- Send existing business environment related supports to Farhad Vazehgoo.
- Marie O'Malley will send work completed by MassMedic
- Emily Reichert will forward a report from AIM
- Need to follow-up with MassCEC to identify reports they may have.