General Assembly **Substitute Bill No. 1179**

January Session, 2025

* SB01179CE 032025 *

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY MAKERSPACE INITIATIVE PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Financial assistance" means any and all forms of grants, loans or other forms of financing.

(2) "Makerspace" means a community space that (A) provides access to tools, technology or educational materials for entrepreneurs, (B) results in the prototyping, creation, production or assembly of tangible personal property, and (C) supports the development of educational opportunities for personal growth, workforce training and early-stage business ventures.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall establish and administer a pilot program to provide financial assistance to eligible entities for the establishment or expansion of makerspaces in the state. The commissioner shall (1) establish eligibility criteria and an application process for the program, and (2) explore means of funding such program, including, but not limited to, public-private partnerships,

grant programs and federal funds or state funds.

(c) Applications for participation in such pilot program shall be submitted in a form and manner prescribed by the commissioner. Each application shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) A description of the makerspace the applicant is seeking to establish or expand; (2) the amount of financial assistance requested by the applicant; and (3) any other information the commissioner deems necessary.

(d) The total amount of financial assistance provided pursuant to the program shall not exceed five million dollars. The total amount of financial assistance provided to an eligible entity shall not exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars per fiscal year.

(e) The commissioner shall require each entity that receives financial assistance pursuant to the program to submit a report to the commissioner containing information regarding (1) the progress of the establishment or expansion of the makerspace proposed in such entity's application, and (2) any other information the commissioner deems necessary. Each such entity shall submit such report not later than two years after such entity receives financial assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, containing an evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of the program to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 32-7o of the general statutes, the Manufacturing Innovation Advisory Board shall make available, to the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, one million dollars from the Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund established pursuant to section 32-7o of the general statutes, for the purpose of providing financial assistance in accordance with section 1 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*July 1, 2025*	New section
Sec. 2	*July 1, 2025*	New section

CE *Joint Favorable Subst.*