

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
H-310, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Wolf:

Thank you for your support of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program in the fiscal year 2010 Omnibus Appropriations bill. We are writing to express our support for the Administration's request of \$129.7 million for MEP in fiscal year 2011 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Manufacturing is one of our country's greatest economic strengths. The U.S. is the world's largest manufacturing economy, producing \$1.6 trillion of value last year. Small and mid-sized manufacturers employ nine million workers in the U.S. who earned an average of \$71,623 annually, including pay and benefits.

A \$129.7 million appropriation for MEP in fiscal year 2011 will allow the existing MEP Center network to continue to create jobs and respond to future challenges and opportunities in the manufacturing sector. Firms that innovate, invest in continuous improvement, and capture global markets are winning in this new economy. Demand for MEP services is greater than ever, and existing MEP centers are in need of these scarce funds to provide critical resources, serve new and existing clients, and create job growth.

The MEP program's well documented impact is substantial. In fiscal year 2009 alone (based on services provided in 2008), MEP projects with small and medium sized manufacturers created or retained 52,948 jobs, generated more than \$9.1 billion in sales, and provided cost savings of more than \$1.41 billion.

At a time when economic recovery is the national priority, we believe MEP continues to be a wise investment. We respectfully request that you appropriate \$129.7 million to and through the existing MEP center network in fiscal year 2011.

Sincerely,

Jim Oberstar

Rep. James L. Oberstar
Co-Chair, NEMW Congressional Coalition

Steve LaTourette

Rep. Steven C. LaTourette
Co-Chair, NEMW Congressional Coalition

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