

Gov. Mike Huckabee  
*Arkansas*

Gov. M. Jodi Rell  
*Connecticut*

Gov. Ruth Ann Minner  
*Delaware*

Gov. Sonny Perdue  
*Georgia*

Gov. Rod Blagojevich  
*Illinois*

Gov. Thomas Vilsack  
*Iowa*

Gov. Kathleen  
Sebelius  
*Kansas*

Gov. John Baldacci  
*Maine*

Gov. Jennifer  
Granholm  
*Michigan*

Gov. Brian Schweitzer  
*Montana*

Gov. Bill Richardson  
*New Mexico*

Gov. Michael Easley  
*North Carolina*

Gov. Bob Taft  
*Ohio*

Gov. Brad Henry  
*Oklahoma*

Gov. Anibal Acevedo-  
Vila  
*Puerto Rico*

Gov. Jim Doyle  
*Wisconsin*

Gov. Dave Freudenthal  
*Wyoming*

March 27, 2006

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Science,  
State, Justice, and Commerce  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Science, State, Justice, and Commerce  
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Appropriators:

We are writing to you to express our strong support for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program which was not adequately funded in the President's FY 2007 budget proposal. We urge you to fund the MEP at \$106 million, which is the level of funding provided for this important program in FY2006.

Manufacturing continues to be the backbone of America's economy, yet recovery in this industry is lagging behind other sectors of the economy. At this critical time, U.S. manufacturing needs our help more than ever. The MEP provides this help to small and mid-sized American manufacturers to modernize to stay competitive in our evolving marketplace. As a successful partnership between federal government, states and small manufacturers, the MEP is vitally important to businesses in our states and is a necessary component to national innovation and economic growth.

The impact of the MEP on American manufacturing businesses is well documented. In a survey of MEP clients served from October 2003 through September 2004, companies around the country reported that, as a result of MEP services, they created or retained 43,624 jobs; increased \$1.889 billion in sales; retained sales of \$2.643 billion; realized \$721 million in cost savings; and invested \$941 million in modernization including plants and equipment, information systems, and workforce and training. In FY 2005 alone, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership served 16,448 clients in ours and many other states.


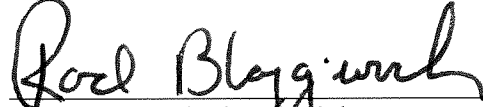

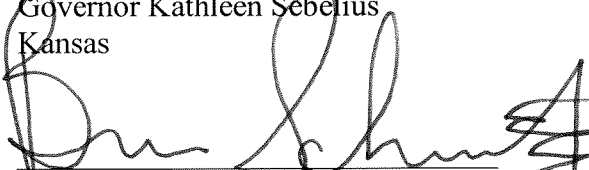






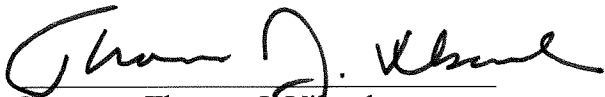


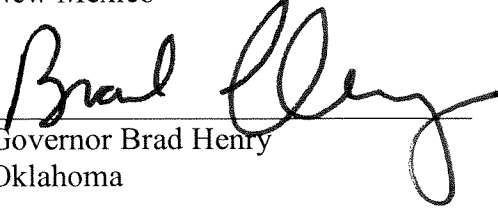

Without the MEP's assistance, many of our small and mid-sized manufacturers may not be competitive in this global marketplace. On behalf of these companies and manufacturing workers in our states, we urge you to fund the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program at \$106 million.

Thank you for considering this important request.

March 27, 2006

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Sincerely,

  
Governor Jennifer M. Granholm  
Michigan  
Governor Mike Huckabee  
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Governor Ruth Ann Minner  
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Governor Brad Henry  
Oklahoma  
Governor Jim Doyle  
Wisconsin

Cc: President George W. Bush