

Senator Brown is again leading a letter to the CJS Subcommittee in support of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program at Commerce. MEP helps smaller U.S. manufacturing companies become more competitive. This letter asks for a slight increase of \$2.4 million from omnibus spending levels to ensure full funding for the program and help MEP better assist manufacturers.

Last year's signers: Brown, Booker, Carper, Baldwin, Gillibrand, Duckworth, Stabenow, Casey, Merkley, Sanders, Durbin, Feinstein, King, Van Hollen, Whitehouse, Menendez, Klobuchar, Peters, Murphy, Cortez Masto, Reed, Coons, Kaine, Wyden, Blumenthal, Cardin, Donnelly, Hassan

Deadline: COB Monday April 9

Staff Contact: Alex Johnson (alex_johnson@brown.senate.gov)

Text of the letter is below. Thank you for considering and please call if you have any questions.

Alex
42044

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Shaheen:

We appreciate your past support of the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program. As you develop the FY2019 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you provide a slight increase in funding for this program to \$142.4 million.

The MEP program is our nation's only network of public-private partnerships that supports small- and medium-sized manufacturers in every state. Through the MEP program, manufacturers are connected with critical resources, allowing them to create and retain jobs and better compete globally. MEP provides support systems that help manufacturers improve supply chain integration, efficiency, productivity, and profitability.

According to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, for every \$1 of federal investment, the MEP program creates \$27.20 in new sales growth for manufacturers. The MEP program also creates or retains one manufacturing job for every \$1,291 it receives from the federal government. The program stimulates growth in the manufacturing sector, which already features a strong multiplier effect, while also providing a strong return on investment for American taxpayers.

As you know, the recently passed FY2018 omnibus appropriations legislation increased funding to this program to \$140 million. Providing full funding for this program at \$142.2 million would further bolster the MEP program's efforts to confront the most pressing challenges of today. U.S. manufacturers continue to develop new services in critical areas such as 3-D printing, cyber security, and supply-chain optimization. In addition, better investment would allow the MEP program to expand its efforts in helping manufacturers re-shore and develop domestic supply chains.

Investing in this program creates jobs and is a cost-effective use of taxpayer dollars. We respectfully request that you continue your support of U.S. manufacturers and provide a slight increase to \$142.4 million in funding for the MEP center network in FY2019.