

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

As you know the manufacturing industry is suffering significantly from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As you negotiate with the Senate to develop the next COVID-19 emergency supplemental bill, we write to ask for your continued support to include two issues of critical importance to the manufacturing industry as it relates to Manufacturing Extension Partnership program (MEP) which is the only nationwide network of public-private partnerships that can provide the assistance they need at this critical time.

By law, MEP Centers are required by federal law to provide a 50% cost share match for all federal funding they receive. Under normal circumstances, the MEP National Network supports this cost share, because it requires local stakeholders and clients to put skin in the game for the services provided.

However, MEP manufacturing clients across the country are beginning to cancel or postpone their contracts with their local MEP Center as they begin to redirect their finances to offset decreased production as a result of the supply chain disruption. If manufacturers continue to cancel their contracts with MEP Centers, then the Centers will likely not be able to meet the federal cost share requirement without potentially laying off Center employees. If Center employees are laid off, they will not be able to help manufacturing clients scale back up their operations to meet demand and recover rapidly from this crisis.

We are also requesting a temporary doubling of MEP's current budget to provide the much-needed assistance to the small manufacturing industry at this time of crisis. Manufacturers across the country are experiencing innumerable challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. MEP is the only federal program in position to immediately assist manufacturers mitigate damage and accelerate recovery. These additional funds will allow MEP Centers help their clients improve supply chain resilience and workforce readiness and provide the technological expertise desperately needed during this time.

As traditional industries such as the domestic auto industry and their supply chains shut down, MEP Centers can do the important work of coordinating and providing technical assistance to

small manufacturers who are able to temporarily transition to the production of desperately-needed Personal Protective Equipment and ventilators.

We respectfully request that these two issues be addressed in the Phase 3 COVID-19 emergency stimulus package.

Sincerely,



Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

**Member Signers:**

Haley M. Stevens  
James P. McGovern  
Suzanne Bonamici  
Joe Neguse  
Bill Johnson  
John B. Larson  
Jimmy Panetta  
David Trone  
Brian Fitzpatrick  
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Marcy Kaptur  
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Josh Gottheimer