



September 19, 2017

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen McCain and Thornberry, and Ranking Members Reed and Smith,

As you plan to meet to discuss the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, we respectfully ask that you **maintain the Senate funding levels** for the **National Defense Education Program (PE 0601120D8Z)** and the **Defense Wide Manufacturing Science and Technology Program (PE 0603680D8Z)**.

These programs provide funding for important manufacturing technology research, development, and training that has and will continue to provide modern capabilities to the Warfighter while strengthening the United States' overall national security readiness. They are critical to the nation's national defense and economic strength.

#### Manufacturing USA Institutes

The Manufacturing USA network of manufacturing Institutes have been and continues to be established to ensure the United States remains globally competitive in the new, high-tech, and diverse field of advanced manufacturing. Each Institute has a technical focus that supports the sponsoring agency's mission. In the case of the eight existing Institutes led by the Department of Defense, collaborators are working on developing cutting-edge manufacturing approaches to reduce cost and time to market of new breakthrough technologies to get them to the Warfighter faster. The Institutes are also creating crucial workforce training programs that will ensure an adequately trained workforce is available for manufacturers to implement the cutting-edge technologies being created. Across the Manufacturing USA program, every \$1 of Federal investment has leveraged \$2 of private funding. For this public-private-partnership to continue to spur manufacturing innovation and technological progress that supports the national and economic security of the United States, the Federal government must continue to invest in the program as promised. That is why we ask you to support the Senate's \$20 million addition to the Defense Wide Manufacturing Science and Technology Program (PE 0603680D8Z) for the Manufacturing USA Institutes.

#### Partnership between MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes

This past year, the Department of Defense began a pilot program to connect the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program to the Manufacturing USA program by placing MEP officials inside

Institutes to bring MEP small-business expertise to Manufacturing USA. This integration also ensures that Manufacturing USA can better provide small-sized manufacturers access and input into innovative approaches and greatly assists technology transfer from the Institutes to small manufacturers across the United States. Integration of small-businesses into these national manufacturing programs is crucial, as half of all manufacturers in the United States have less than 500 employees, and three-fourths of those manufactures have less than 20 employees. Your support for the Senate's \$15 million addition to the National Defense Education Program (PE 0601120D8Z) for the Partnership between MEP Centers and Manufacturing USA Institutes will ensure better partnerships between these small businesses and the advanced manufacturing assets and experts in the Manufacturing USA network.

Manufacturing Engineering Education Grant Program

The Manufacturing Engineering Education Grant Program was established in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 to help the Department of Defense bridge the skills-gap that is challenging the entire industrial base ecosystem. Through this program, engineers, technologists, technicians, and manufacturers will be better equipped to manufacture military equipment and technology domestically. This simultaneously supports the American Warfighter, and also promotes national security and economic welfare by maintaining advanced manufacturing infrastructure. For these reasons, we ask you to support the Senate's \$20 million addition to the Defense Wide Manufacturing Science and Technology Program (PE 0603680D8Z) for the Manufacturing Engineering Education Grant Program.

We are mindful of the fiscal environment in which we are operating and would like to thank you for considering the important impact of these manufacturing programs on the mission of the Department of Defense and on the country as a whole.

Sincerely,



Tom Loughlin  
CEO, ASME

*American Society of Mechanical Engineers*



Jeff Krause  
CEO, SME

*Society of Manufacturing Engineers*

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*Statement approved by the ASME Manufacturing Public Policy Task Force (MPPTF).*

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ASME is a non-profit technical and educational organization with more than 140,000 members globally. The Society's members work in all sectors of the economy, including industry, academia, and government. This position statement represents the views of the Manufacturing Public Policy Task of the ASME Public Affairs and Outreach Council and is not necessarily a position of ASME as a whole.