



For Immediate Release

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**NH Manufacturers Lose Greatest Resource as a Result
of Today's Omnibus Budget Vote**

Vote Slashes Budget by 60 Percent Effectively Wiping Out NH MEP Funding

CONCORD, NH - New Hampshire manufacturers are losing their greatest resource as a result of today's vote approving omnibus budget bill in the U.S. Senate. The budget for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership has been cut by 60 percent for FY 2004, forcing the imminent closure of the offices of the New Hampshire Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NH MEP).

"This is a devastating loss for manufacturing in New Hampshire," said Mark Godfrey, chairman of the NH MEP Board of Directors and president of Felton Brush in Londonderry. "Since 1999 New Hampshire manufacturers have benefited from over \$34.6 million in increased and retained sales as a direct result of their involvement with the NH MEP. Now during a time when manufacturing job losses are spiraling out of control and companies are moving overseas, our state's manufacturers are losing an invaluable resource because of these budget cuts."

New Hampshire manufacturers have saved over \$8 million working with the NH MEP and over 300 jobs have been created or retained thanks to NH MEP programs.

"I don't understand how the Bush administration can consistently say it supports manufacturers and then turn around and support a budget that wipes out a proven program that helps local manufacturers," said Jack Metzemaekers, vice chairman of the NH MEP Board of Directors and president of Scott Electronics in Salem. "We've lost over 22,000 manufacturing jobs in the state of New Hampshire over a span of just over five years. How can you effectively wipe out a program that has helped local companies become more competitive, save money and save local jobs?"

NH MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of

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manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. NH MEP works in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development. For more information on the services NH MEP project managers provide, contact the Concord office at 226-3200.

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