

March 27, 2007

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
Michigan

Gov. M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut

Gov. Ruth Ann Minner
Delaware

Gov. Rod Blagojevich
Illinois

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius
Kansas

Gov. John Baldacci
Maine

Gov. Deval Patrick
Massachusetts

Gov. John Lynch
New Hampshire

Gov. Jon S. Corzine
New Jersey

Gov. Bill Richardson
New Mexico

Gov. Michael F. Easley
North Carolina

Gov. Ted Strickland
Ohio

Gov. Brad Henry
Oklahoma

Gov. Ted Kulongoski
Oregon

Gov. Edward G. Rendell
Pennsylvania

Gov. Anibal Acevedo Vilá
Puerto Rico

Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr.
Utah

Gov. Chris Gregoire
Washington

Gov. Jim Doyle
Wisconsin

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science and Related
Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Mollohan, Chairwoman Mikulski, Mr. Frelinghuysen, and Senator Shelby:

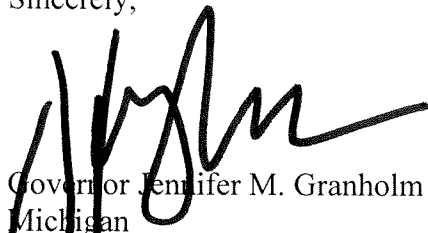
We are writing to you to express our strong support for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program which was not adequately funded in the President's FY 2008 budget proposal. We urge you to fund the MEP at \$113 million for FY 2008, an increase of \$7 million from FY 2006 funding levels. An increase in MEP funding is necessary to ensure the sustainability of our domestic small manufacturing industry and high-quality, high-paying jobs.

Small manufacturers continue to be an integral part of the American economy, employing over six million Americans and accounting for approximately 57 percent of the value of all manufactured goods, yet recovery in this industry is lagging behind other sectors of the economy. At this critical time, U.S. manufacturing needs federal support more than ever. The MEP helps small and mid-sized American manufacturers modernize and 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 fiscal year 2005 alone, MEP clients reported 53,219 new or retained workers, sales of \$6.25 billion, cost savings of \$1.3 billion, and plant and equipment investments of \$2.25 billion. These results are made possible in part by the MEP assistance our states' manufacturers receive.

A \$113 million appropriation for MEP in FY 2008 is critical to the sustainability of our domestic manufacturing sector. Without strong federal support, MEP will be unable to maintain its mission of serving America's small manufacturers. At a time when global competitiveness demands integrated and sustained innovation in our domestic manufacturing sector, we believe MEP continues to be a wise investment.


Sincerely,




Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Michigan



Governor M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut



Governor Ruth Ann Minner
Delaware




Governor Rod Blagojevich
Illinois



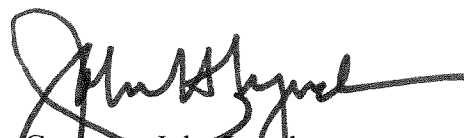
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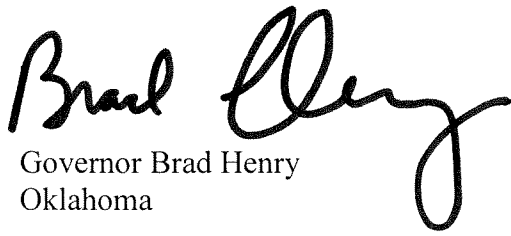
Governor Bill Richardson
New Mexico




Governor Michael F. Easley
North Carolina




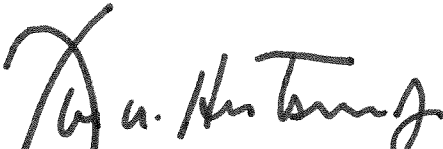
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