

**Joe Trauger**

*Vice President*

*Human Resources Policy*

June 7, 2012

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
House Education & Workforce Committee  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
House Education & Workforce Committee  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20512

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), I am writing to express our thanks for your leadership in creating a skilled workforce and specifically your effort to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act.

The NAM is the nation's largest industrial trade association, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states. The NAM's mission is to enhance the competitiveness of the manufacturing economy by advocating policies that are conducive to U.S. economic growth. However the Federal workforce development system as it exists today is a complicated web of boards and structures that are often unworkable for employers to participate in or benefit from. Manufacturers are significantly impacted by the lack of workers with skills to meet the needs of advanced manufacturing. We need immediate solutions to replenish the pipeline and help bring America out of the economic recession. Reauthorization of the program is an opportunity to strengthen the partnership between employers and the workforce investment system.

Training funding should be focused on the type of training that will result in jobs. We applaud the committee's efforts to recognize the value of industry-based credentials to the workforce training system. Credentials that have been identified by employers as necessary for success should be a priority in workforce development. Although NAM members would like the legislation to have more of a focus on national portability, the inclusion of industry-based credentials in the state and local plans and in job corps shows the commitment the committee has towards these valuable programs and the resulting efficiencies in workforce training.

Nationally portable, industry-recognized credentials are the primary workforce development priority for the NAM. However, manufacturers are also pleased to see a significant effort to reform the WIA system and reduce the bureaucracy, allowing workforce training dollars to focus on training. For example, we support the elimination of sequence of service, the elimination of many outdated and unnecessary workforce boards and a less prescriptive board structure for state and local boards, allowing for increased employer involvement.

Manufacturers have identified 600,000 jobs that are going unfilled due to a lack of skilled workers. We need access to individuals with the technical skills necessary for modern manufacturing. We have identified the skills and certification necessary to begin to fill that gap and believe existing workforce training programs, such as the Workforce Investment Act, should prioritize and focus resources on those programs. This bill takes a step in that direction. We look forward to working with the committee as the bill progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Trauger", is centered on a light green rectangular background.

Joe Trauger  
Vice President  
Human Resources Policy