



February 28, 2013

Chairman John Kline
2439 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairwoman Virginia Foxx
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Kline and Chairwoman Foxx:

On behalf of the Forging Industry Association (FIA), we would like to thank you for your work on HR 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act.

FIA strongly endorses HR 803 because it addresses much needed reform of our country's job training system.

Forging is one of the oldest known metalworking processes, where metal is pressed, pounded or squeezed under great pressure into high-strength parts known as forgings. The process is usually performed by heating the metal to a desired temperature before it is worked. Forged parts are strong and reliable and therefore, vital in safety-critical applications. Rarely seen by consumers, forgings are normally key component parts inside assemblies. For example, forgings are necessary components in the following applications:

- **Automotive** – A single car or truck may contain 250 forgings, and 40% of all truck axle assemblies are comprised of forged components;
- **Aerospace** – structural, engine and landing gear parts of commercial and military aircraft are forged;
- **Defense** – a heavy tank contains over 550 separate forgings, the 120mm gun tube on the M1A2 battle tank is forged, the US Navy's Aegis Class guided missile destroyers are steered by 2 forged rudder stocks approximately 20 feet in length and weighing 35,000 pounds each, cruise missile warheads and all penetrator bomb cases are forged, and a standard artillery shell usually contains at least 2 forged components;
- **Power Generation** – safe and reliable pressure vessels, generator rotors, pump shafts, valve manifolds, valve bodies, turbine blades and shafts, pipes, and fittings are forged for nuclear (commercial and naval), land, and marine power generation equipment;
- **Wind Energy** – about 20 metric tons of forgings are used in a typical large wind turbine;
- **Oil and Gas Exploration** – hundreds of forgings are used in both an oil rig tension leg platform and land-based drilling rigs;
- **Mining** – forgings up to 70,000 pounds are used in surface and underground mining equipment. A forged drill bit was used to rescue the Chilean miners;
- **Rail** – The Association of American Railroads requires all axles to be forged for railcars and locomotives. In locomotives, the traction gears and the engine crankshaft and camshaft are all forged;
- **Medical** – Quality surgical tools and joint replacements require strong, light-weight forgings;
- **Tools** - Hammers and wrenches are forged; and
- **Sports** – Forged golf clubs allow more efficient transfer of energy from clubs to ball than traditional clubs – that equals more distance without swinging harder.

The North American forging industry is comprised of approximately 500 forging operations in 38 states, Canada and Mexico. The modern forging process is capital intensive, and most forging plants are small businesses. According to a 2011 survey by The Manufacturing Institute, more than 600,000 manufacturing jobs went unfilled due to a shortage of skilled workers, and 40 percent of manufacturing workers are expected to retire in the next five years. Two-thirds of small business leaders and more than half of all business leaders struggle to recruit employees with the right education and training, particularly for skilled production jobs like those in the U.S. forging industry.

While FIA agrees that we must cut spending to fix our nation's economy, some programs and public-private partnerships can be effective. FIA supports better coordination among educators, government, and the private sector to recruit employees into manufacturing and provide them the K-12 foundation and job training to fill high-skill positions. Such efforts must be employer-focused, demand-driven workforce development programs that focus on the needs of manufacturers and combine vocational training with on-the-job training programs. We believe that HR 803 helps to accomplish these goals by reducing multiple bureaucracies and trading wasteful spending for effective funding, and by improving the involvement of the employers and community colleges in a local area.

We look forward to advocating for HR 803 and thank you again for your commitment to common-sense job training reform. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 216-781-6260 or roy@forging.org; or Jennifer Baker Reid, FIA's Washington Representative, at 202-393-8524 or jreid@thelaurinbakergroup.com, if you or your staff needs any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Roy Hardy
Executive Vice President