March 23, 2016

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
H-309 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda  
Acting Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Honda:

Thank you for your support of the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act (H.R. 2029). We are writing to express our support for the program as you develop the FY 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill and respectfully request $140.4 million in funding in Fiscal Year 2017.

The MEP is the only public-private partnership dedicated to providing technical support and services to small and medium-sized manufacturers in every state. MEP is a nationwide network of proven resources that enables manufacturers to compete globally, supports greater supply chain integration, and provides access to information, training and technologies that improve efficiency, productivity and profitability. Full funding for MEP in FY 2017 will allow the existing MEP center network to facilitate job creation and respond to future challenges and opportunities in the manufacturing sector.

Demand for MEP services is greater than ever, and the program has a proven track record of boosting economic growth. According to data from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), every dollar invested in MEP facilitates $17 in new sales growth. Based on services provided in FY 2014, MEP supported $8.0 billion in new and retained sales and $3.2 billion in investment in U.S. manufacturing. The program created or retained 68,477 jobs and provided support to 29,101 manufacturers. Since its inception in 1988, MEP has worked with more than 86,000 manufacturers and helped to create more than 797,000 jobs.

Although the unemployment rate has declined significantly, creating middle class jobs for the 7.8 million Americans who are unemployed remains a priority. MEP continues to be a cost-effective, job-creating investment that boosts American manufacturing and competitiveness.

We respectfully request that you provide $140.4 million in funding for the MEP center network in FY 2017.

Sincerely,

Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress

Eliot Engel
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy III
Member of Congress

Matthew Cartwright
Member of Congress

Sander Levin
Member of Congress

Tim Murphy
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko
Member of Congress

Colin C. Peterson
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Alma Adams
Member of Congress
John R. Moolenaar  
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress

Bruce Poliquin  
Member of Congress

Lou Barletta  
Member of Congress

Frank C. Guinta  
Member of Congress

William Keating  
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Alan Grayson  
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress