

**Remarks Prepared for Jay Timmons
President and CEO, National Association of Manufacturers
State of Manufacturing Tour: Chicago, Ill.
February 3, 2016
Harper College**

Good morning. It's great to be here. I had a terrific opportunity to visit Palatine High School this morning and meet some of the students who may soon be joining you here at Harper. Now, it's a privilege to speak here among educators who are working hard to develop this nation's workforce talent...and among students who will soon be leading the U.S. economy forward.

I want to thank and recognize a few people...

- President Ender and Dean Ottinger, for welcoming us to Harper College...
- Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti for joining us...
- Greg Baise, for your leadership of manufacturers here in Illinois...
- And David Etwiler, thank you again for being here and for sharing your insights. Siemens continues to make great contributions here in America, not just through the people you employ and the work you do—but also through the Siemens Foundation's investment in building a 21st century manufacturing workforce.

I also want to thank all NAM members who've joined us this afternoon, for your commitment and dedication to the future of manufacturing. And I want to recognize NAM Board Member Sandy Westlund-Deenihan, CEO and Design Engineer of Quality Float Works, who chairs the NAM's Education and Workforce Committee...

...and Ed Youdell, President and CEO of the Fabricators and Manufacturers Association—who created the concept of a national Manufacturing Day. In addition, the generosity of the FMA helped make Harper's Advanced Manufacturing Lab a reality.

I'm here today to share with you the State of Manufacturing in the United States. Why manufacturing? It's simple really. It's because the strength of manufacturing in America is responsible for the success of America in the world. That is an indisputable fact. When manufacturing succeeds, America succeeds.

That may sound counterintuitive to some, and it belies the picture some would like to paint: that manufacturing means things of the past—old, gritty factories, simple tools and rudimentary machines.

If that's the image the word "manufacturing" conjures in your mind, then, ladies and gentlemen, it's time to introduce you to modern manufacturing.

Today's manufacturing is vastly different from yesterday's. The National Association of Manufacturers has more than 14,000 member companies, from world-recognized brands to family-owned small businesses, and we are the voice of more than 12 million working men and women, their families and the communities they build.

Just a quick look at some of our members' work will show you: modern manufacturing touches every aspect of our lives.

From Boeing's unmanned airborne vehicles that provide security, disaster relief and search and rescue...

...toAbbVie's and Abbott's research and production of products to fight disease and keep us well.

From Tenneco's technology to make our air cleaner and our cars run more efficiently...

...to the vast new world of the Internet of Things, where everyday objects are now digitally interconnected by the web.

First it was our phones. Then it was our thermostats, our watches, our cars. Soon it will be everything from our contact lenses to our entire homes.

Thanks to companies like Honeywell, for example, you can control your home security and energy management with the touch of a button from around the world.

Iconic companies like Caterpillar are using data analytics to know when machinery may be malfunctioning and proactively initiate maintenance.

That's the Internet of Things...and that's modern manufacturing.

By 2020, 26 billion objects will be linked together by the Internet. Manufacturing is truly changing everything...and all these things are changing manufacturing and America.

It's also a revolution that will be on display to the world this coming April—at the largest industrial trade show in the world, Hannover Messe, in Hannover, Germany. This year, the United States is the official partner country for the event, which last year drew 220,000 visitors used to see the latest technologies and new frontiers of digital integration in manufacturing.

Across America, more than twelve million people work in manufacturing, building this incredible future. Our industry contributes more than \$2 trillion to national GDP.

If U.S. manufacturing were its own country, it would be the ninth-largest economy in the world.

Here in Illinois, manufacturers employ 10 percent of workers and contribute about \$100 billion to the state economy.

And get this important data point: For every \$1.00 spent in manufacturing, another \$1.40 is added to the economy.

So, you see, the state of manufacturing matters. It matters for the state of our union.

Every day, manufacturers go to work, competing to win. But there remain obstacles to forging an economy that lives up to our people and the potential we can unleash.

Unavoidable headwinds, global economic weakness and worldwide instability have roiled manufacturing. While these challenges will be slow to change, our leaders have the power to fix other self-imposed barriers: policies in Washington that imperil our promise.

These barriers exist because Washington hasn't yet summoned the will to change them. And because "We The People," in some ways, haven't done enough to fight for manufacturing as essential to American Exceptionalism.

Just as "American Idol" is entering its final season, it's also time to stop selecting of our political candidates based on how they sound, rather than what they can do.

Of course, if you listen to the candidates who are out campaigning, they all support manufacturing...at least rhetorically. And the same is true of our leaders in Congress and state capitals—and among the general public.

But, words alone don't build the right business environment or produce a skilled workforce.

So at the NAM, we want to make it easy on our leaders. We're spelling it out for them with exactly the right policies for manufacturers...for America...to compete and win.

So we've released, "Competing to Win," our 2016 Economic Growth and American Exceptionalism Agenda. It's a policy roadmap guided by four core values, which are also foundational principles of the country we love.

The first is free enterprise: market forces that drive innovation and growth better than any system ever conceived.

The second is competitiveness: our ability to expand markets and succeed in the global economy.

The third is individual liberty: the creativity and entrepreneurship unleashed by protecting and advancing the freedoms enshrined in our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

And the fourth, equal opportunity: our shared belief that every one of us, if given the chance, has the potential to contribute to the success of our companies, our communities and our country.

Every policy proposal supports these principles—which are also the values that keep America exceptional.

Our message is this: If a candidate wants to be a manufacturing president...if Congress wants to energize the manufacturing economy...if you want to be a manufacturing voter...this is the agenda.

We zero in on eleven areas: tax, trade, energy, environment, transportation, labor, immigration, workforce, healthcare, innovation and regulatory and legal reform.

More topics than we have time for this morning...so I'd like to focus on a subject central to your mission here at Harper College: developing the nation's workforce.

Over the next decade, the United States will need to fill 3.4 million manufacturing jobs. But 2 million of those jobs are likely to remain empty because there's a shortage of trained workers.

It's what we call the "skills gap" and it affects all of us...through lost innovation, lower productivity, and suppressed economic activity.

The problem is especially disheartening given how hard it's been lately for even college graduates to find good jobs...even though manufacturers have plenty to offer.

The average manufacturing worker earns over \$79,000 annually... \$15,000 more than the national average for other industries.

These wages can provide a good life for a family while saving for education and retirement.

Why, then, are only 37 percent of parents encouraging their kids to pursue manufacturing careers? And why do only 18 percent of students view manufacturing as a top career choice?

Because many people don't understand modern manufacturing. Images of gritty factory floors of a century ago still hold sway.

Manufacturers need to replace those images with visions of what manufacturing is today.

We need to present students like you with exciting propositions:

Want to feed the world? Manufacturing is transforming agricultural technologies to provide plentiful, nutritious food for a growing population.

Want clean energy and a sustainable economy? Well, that's manufacturing, too—and it will require creativity and innovation.

Want to save lives and treat debilitating diseases? Manufacturing includes pharmaceuticals.

Want to invent the next revolutionary smart device? That's manufacturing.

More students—and their families, teachers, and mentors—need to realize the opportunities that exist in manufacturing.

We also need to address the training programs that prepare students to assume these challenging roles. The vast majority of manufacturing executives say they struggle to find job candidates with computer and math skills, problem solving abilities and technical training.

We need to find ways to help students develop these highly marketable skills. And we must give them greater opportunity to explore careers firsthand, so they can chart a direction uniquely suited to their interests and abilities.

This isn't something educational institutions like this one should be left to do alone. Manufacturing companies, schools, and communities must partner in building a 21st-century workforce.

That's exactly what's happening here at Harper College. Harper College's programs in Manufacturing Technology, Maintenance Technology, and Welding Technology are specially tailored to meet the needs of Chicago area manufacturers.

Partnerships with the Illinois Manufacturers Association and Siemens, as well as companies like Amada, Mitsubishi and Miller Electric, ensure that the programs meet the needs of advanced manufacturing and lead to industry certifications. And through the Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Apprenticeship program, students can prepare for a job after graduation.

Harper College is also part of the Get Skills to Work coalition, which includes the NAM's Manufacturing Institute and other companies and technical colleges committed to recruiting, training, and retaining veterans in long-term careers in advanced manufacturing and other disciplines.

Other schools—and other companies—can follow your lead.

Across this country, we want to students to know exactly how their classes apply to the real world, rather than having to ask—"when will I ever use this?"

Manufacturers are here to help. We're eager to collaborate on internship and apprenticeship programs...and to partner with you to align curriculum with work-based opportunities. And we're listening for ideas about how we can surround students and recent graduates with the support and work-based learning opportunities they need.

These steps will help us close the skills gap and enable a new generation of workers to achieve great things for themselves and their families.

But these measures alone will not solve our talent problems. Our workplaces will also be strengthened when we get immigration policy right.

Our people and our economy are strong because of our diversity as a nation as well. Here's a fact, whether some candidates like it or not: we are a nation of immigrants. We attract the best and the brightest, the most industrious, to our shores.

Instead of hostility and vitriol directed at 12 million human beings who happen to be undocumented, let's figure out how to enable them to contribute to America's success.

Let's acknowledge that our immigration system is broken. Let's fix it and get it right.

We should advance a rigorous and fair employment verification system....Institute a border security plan that allows for free trade and improved security....Increase the number of employment-based visas....Streamline the employment-based green card system and allow for those that are unused to roll over from year to year.

That way, talent nurtured right here in America can be put to work ensuring the future of American Exceptionalism.

And ultimately, that's what all of this is about—empowering us to pioneer the future.

It's about helping real people build better lives.

To offer the mom living in Chicago a job to provide for her children today and her retirement tomorrow...

To give the family in Wheaton a chance to advance and achieve a higher standard of living...

To ensure the veteran coming home to Springfield can enjoy the freedom she defended for all of us overseas...

And to give communities across the state a foundation for growth and hope for tomorrow.

Throughout America's history, manufacturers have made our country stronger by the people we employ, the lives we touch, and the products we make. Today, building a stronger country requires something else—bringing the right leaders together to get the job done.

We need to elect and support people who believe in solutions—and those four foundational principles I outlined earlier: free enterprise, competitiveness, individual liberty and equal opportunity.

You know, leading our great nation is about more than who can yell the loudest, or who can denigrate others most, or who can express the least desire to work across ideological lines.

No, true leadership that is worthy of the promise of America brings out the best in all of us. A great leader appeals to our aspirations as a people.

A great leader unites. He or she doesn't divide

So we're raising our collective voices—the 12 million voices in the Manufacturing Army—to speak out...and take a stand. We need you to join us.

We're manufacturers. We make things—incredible, life-changing things. And now, it's up to us to make a difference again—for the future of our country.

Thank you so much.