

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2025

Secretary Howard Lutnick
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Acting Director Craig Burkhardt
National Institute of Standards and Technology
100 Bureau Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20899

Secretary Lutnick and Acting Director Burkhardt:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program (MEP), as well as the renewal of the Commerce Department's cooperative agreement with the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC). Michigan's manufacturing roots run deep, and I believe that our state is critical to actualizing our shared goal of boosting domestic production. With our common objective of spurring job creation and catalyzing American innovation, I urge the Commerce Department and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to work with me to build on the MMTC's progress.

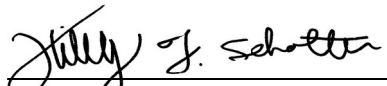
Since the 1990s, the MMTC has uplifted businesses across Michigan with the support of Congressionally-directed, MEP dollars. The Center continues to honor our state's rich manufacturing history by providing small- and medium-sized producers with the skills, technology, and resources to remain competitive. The MMTC's success does not come as a surprise, as our state is home to the 5th largest advanced manufacturing workforce with nearly half of Michiganders working in production occupations. Spanning from the automotive to defense industries, Michigan's talented workforce is uniquely positioned to lead in American manufacturing. With Michigan's manufacturing employment growth outpacing average state-wide rates by double, we cannot let up now if we hope to onshore vital supply chains.

As we agree on the need to be efficient, responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, it is worth highlighting the strides MMTC has made over the last year alone. In 2024, the MMTC enabled its clients to increase sales by over \$158 million, as well as retain almost \$450 million in sales. With these savings, domestic manufacturers associated with the MMTC invested approximately \$105 million back into their operations, further stimulating local economies. The Center created an estimated 5,000 manufacturing jobs—well-paying jobs that empower working- and middle-class families to achieve the American dream. Finally, the MMTC secured almost \$30 million in cost savings last year, proving the efficacy of NIST's federal investments.

The MMTC's cooperative agreement is set to expire in late June, and the Center has applied for a renewal for July 1, 2025. Should NIST not continue its partnership with the MMTC, Michigan may no longer lead our nation in developing its robust manufacturing base. Our communities—including the skilled workforce and inventive businesses within—will face immediate, tangible impacts through job loss and decreased production outputs. The MMTC's cooperative agreement with NIST is the linchpin to solidifying America's manufacturing dominance. I respectfully urge the Trump Administration to work with me to best support the Commerce Department and MMTC's partnership by renewing the Center's cooperative agreement before July 1, 2025.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to collaborating to uphold Michigan's manufacturing tradition and secure our great nation's leadership on the international stage.

Sincerely,


Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress