

# THE NAM AGENDA FOR JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

## *Investing in America*

**W**hy do members of Congress, governors, mayors and other elected officials work so hard to attract manufacturing facilities to their areas? Because they know that manufacturing provides reliable, good-paying and rewarding jobs for their constituents, while substantially adding to the tax base at all levels of government. Indeed, manufacturing in America is the engine that drives the U.S. economy by creating jobs, opportunity and prosperity.

For more than a century, the United States has enjoyed global leadership in manufacturing. While that is still true today, our country's dominance is at risk. Other nations are investing in technology, adjusting their tax codes and building their infrastructure to accommodate and attract manufacturing. The rules for success in the global economy are constantly changing, and manufacturers in America are all too often victimized by outdated policies that harm their ability to compete and provide high-paying jobs to American workers. The United States needs a renewed commitment from its government leaders to implement an aggressive new strategy for investing in America so that our country retains a strong and healthy manufacturing base in the 21st century.

### **Energy Security**

- Establish a national commitment to reduce the energy intensity of the U.S. economy through strategic goal-setting, public-private partnerships and consumer education.
- Strengthen R&D efforts with new labs, break-through research, and increased funding for basic R&D.
- Increase domestic baseload power generation from clean coal, nuclear and renewable sources through regulatory reform or incentives.
- Expand the domestic supply of reliable, low-cost domestic oil and natural gas through exploration and new methods of production.
- Promote the expansion and development of alternative fossil fuels and biofuels.

### **Revitalized Infrastructure**

- Develop a 21st-century transportation network by improving strategic inter-modal links and upgrading overall capacity to move goods.
- Deploy innovative technology to ensure reliable, low-cost shipping.
- Expand airport capacity, reduce urban congestion, upgrade inland waterways and pursue opportunities for new methods of financing and constructing infrastructure projects.
- Provide a favorable regulatory and legislative framework to encourage and support broadband deployment, access and use.
- Promote policies that strengthen cyber security for U.S. industry, including supply chain security.
- Improve our system of patent examination and provide adequate funding for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

### **A Level International Playing Field**

- Conclude the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round of trade negotiations in a way that will enable American manufacturers to sell more globally.
- Open foreign markets to U.S. exports by enacting the pending free and fair trade agreements and supporting new agreements with more countries.
- Obtain market-based currencies through stronger International Monetary Fund oversight and negotiations to avoid currency manipulation.
- Streamline trade rules including customs, border security, visa processing and standards and other technical barriers to trade.
- Enforce trade and compliance rules more effectively, particularly those related to intellectual property theft and counterfeiting.
- Revamp controls on U.S. exports to obtain a realistic system that will promote both national security and economic competitiveness.

### **Legal and Regulatory Fairness**

- Restore fairness to the legal system so the rights of individuals and the stability of businesses are not threatened by abusive lawsuits and unreasonable awards.
- Minimize conflicting regulatory schemes and technical standards.
- Reduce excessive regulatory costs through sound science requirements and economic analysis.
- Promote common sense changes to the Sarbanes-Oxley law to ensure regulations governing financial accountability are reasonable and not overly burdensome.

### **Fair and Competitive Tax Policy**

- Reduce the federal statutory corporate tax rate to 25 percent and repeal the corporate alternative minimum tax, with expedited refunds of pre-paid taxes.
- Strengthen and make permanent the R&D credit.
- Reform tax laws to reduce the "double tax" and costly compliance burden on U.S. companies doing business overseas.
- Maintain lower income tax rates for individuals and small businesses, and significantly reduce the burden of the federal estate and gift tax.
- Maintain lower tax rates on investment income and lower the tax rates on corporate capital gains.

### **High-Performance Workforce**

- Reform the current visa system to attract and retain global talent in the United States.
- Support a national emphasis on math, science and engineering in education, and improve coordination of our workforce training.
- Support initiatives to ensure that every student earns an education or certified workforce skills.

### **Consumer-Based Health Care**

- Promote health information technology and transparency initiatives for improving health care and lowering costs.
- Endorse wellness and prevention programs to reduce costs associated with chronic conditions and to achieve better health outcomes.
- Support innovation and cost-containment measures such as Association Health Plans, health savings accounts and medical liability reform.

**M**anufacturing in America is central to our nation's economic prosperity and our national security. Over the past year, manufacturing production has risen by more than 6 percent—the fastest pace in eight-and-a-half years.



Yet, manufacturers continue to face challenges on a number of fronts. Our companies are significantly hindered by structural costs that continue to rise—often because of costly or burdensome government policies. Companies cannot pass on these cost increases to customers because of intense global competition from producers in countries that do not face these same structural costs.

Our updated 2006 NAM/Manufacturing Institute study, *The Escalating Cost Crisis*, found that external costs of production related to litigation, energy, health care, regulation and taxes add an astounding 31.7 percent to American manufacturers' production costs compared to our major trading partners. These added costs are self-inflicted wounds by our government that must be addressed by our nation's policy-makers.

American manufacturers look forward to working with members of the 110th Congress on these and other policies that foster a vibrant manufacturing environment in the United States for future generations. The **NAM Agenda for Jobs and Economic Growth: Investing in America** is the first bold step to achieve this goal.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Engler".

John Engler  
President & CEO  
National Association of Manufacturers

## The Voice of the Manufacturing Economy

Manufacturing employs 14.3 million people in the United States, plus another 6 million in related fields such as supply chain, finance and wholesale. No other sector of the economy performs more R&D, drives more innovation, generates more exports or contributes more to our economic growth. In fact, manufacturing in the United States would be the eighth-largest economy in the world if it were an independent nation. The future strength of the American economy, and our ability to maintain a high standard of living in the face of fierce global competition, depends on manufacturing.

The NAM is the voice of the manufacturing economy, representing more than 100,000 companies. As the nation's largest industrial trade association, the NAM works with Congress and the Administration to:

- advocate and enact a pro-manufacturing, pro-jobs agenda;
- promote policies that enable manufacturers in the United States to compete in the global economy and improve living standards for working Americans; and
- educate policymakers, the media and the general public about the significant economic impact of manufacturing and why we must fight to keep our manufacturing economy strong.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the NAM has 10 other offices across the country. To learn more about manufacturing's vital role and our pro-manufacturing, pro-jobs policy agenda, visit [www.nam.org/manufacts](http://www.nam.org/manufacts).



**M**anufacturing in America—the engine that drives American prosperity.

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110TH CONGRESS

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