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**House of Representatives**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

**HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE HEARING**

**Topic: Jobs**

**Allentown Economic Development Corporation – Allentown, PA  
March 19, 2015**

**AGENDA**

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 10:10 a.m. Eileen Cipriani  
Special Assistant for Strategic Initiatives  
Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry
- 10:30 a.m. Panel One:
- Primo Acernese, President/CEO, TerraGroup Corporation
  - Lori Novak, Vice President of Administration, Terra Group
  - Mark Tapsak, Chief Science Officer of Zzyzx Polymers and Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
- 11:10 a.m. Panel Two:
- Nancy Dischinat, Executive Director, Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board
  - Michelle Griffin Young, Executive Vice President of Government & External Affairs, Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce
  - Ed Balukas, President, UAW Local 677
- 11:50 a.m. Closing Remarks



**Written Testimony of Acting Secretary Kathy Manderino  
Department of Labor & Industry**

**before the House Democratic Policy Caucus regarding jobs**

**March 19, 2015**

Labor & Industry is the commonwealth's fifth largest agency with 30+ program areas. L&I enforces laws impacting the workplace including unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, prevailing wage laws and other employment issues. We also house the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation that helps people with disabilities find jobs. L&I also has many programs to promote workforce development within the commonwealth. Helping residents find jobs and providing the necessary job training to equip them for the jobs that are available today are some of our chief tasks.

Gov. Wolf's plan for Pennsylvania calls for JOBS THAT PAY, SCHOOLS THAT TEACH AND GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS.

We have a jobs deficit- too many are still struggling to make ends meet and too many of our best and brightest are leaving for opportunities elsewhere.

The state saw modest job growth last year— just more than one percent. This is not good enough. Our focus must be on helping struggling industries and accelerating those on the rise.

We must make new investments in 21st century manufacturing and refocus our economic development dollars and strategies. We must remove taxes that are a burden to growth and close loopholes that create unfairness in the system.

For too long the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hasn't been a place where businesses want to come, invest and grow. Country-leading high corporate tax rates have slowed existing businesses from expanding and entrepreneurs from growing new ideas here.

The commonwealth can help set the table for robust private sector growth to create and retain good jobs while strengthening the middle class, but in order to do that, we must acknowledge that success will require investment in our companies and our people, and a new business climate that is welcoming and fair.

Gov. Wolf's 2015-16 budget contains significant reforms aimed at three goals for economic development and creating good-paying, middle class jobs: Creating a pro-growth business climate; building Pennsylvania's manufacturing sector; and creating workforce partnerships for economic success.

### Creating a Pro-Growth Business Climate

We'll start with how we believe we can create a competitive climate to attract and retain jobs and businesses, and building strong, stable communities.

Pennsylvania's economic prosperity has long been hobbled by an outdated tax structure that fails to incentivize job growth. Gov. Wolf's sweeping tax relief package achieves economic growth and improves the fairness of the commonwealth's tax structure by:

Fifteen years ago, Governor Ridge proposed the gradual phase-out of the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax—but the tax's elimination has been delayed time and again. In this year's budget, we're going to get this done.

Leveling the playing field by eliminating loopholes through combined reporting to level the playing field for all Pennsylvania business. Combined reporting means that corporations in a group will figure their income for the entire group, and transactions between members of the group are eliminated so it is harder to shelter income.

### Building Pennsylvania's Manufacturing Sector

Manufacturing has been at the heart of many communities and the growth of our middle class. Gov. Wolf's budget will build on that Pennsylvania tradition to create new, good-paying jobs.

We will create a 'Made In Pennsylvania Job Creation Program' through a \$5 million tax credit to be distributed to manufacturing companies that are creating good paying, middle class jobs.

For manufacturing companies that increase their annual taxable payroll by at least \$1 million over a four-quarter period, the commonwealth will provide cash payments of up to 5 percent of new taxable payroll the following year.

In order to qualify, these new jobs must be full-time, have an average wage equal to or above the county wage in which the company is locating or expanding, and include competitive health benefits.

Next, we will provide \$5 million for a new initiative that combines the knowledge and experience of the state's Industrial Resource Centers with the breaking technological advances of our higher education sector.

The IRC Manufacturing Initiative will mobilize the talents of Pennsylvania's research universities to advance manufacturing technology and commercialization. We anticipate that this investment will be leverage by 3:1 for federal and private investment.

### Creating Workforce Partnerships for Economic Success

Pennsylvania's educational and job training systems are too often disconnected from the state's economy. Training programs frequently do not train workers for real jobs that offer family-sustaining wages and employers struggle to find talent locally as a result.

Gov. Wolf's budget will take bold steps to address this challenge by increasing funding for important programs to supply workers in need of skills with the training they need and help employers find and train employees with 21st Century job skills.

This includes \$18 million for programs that help Pennsylvanians gain targeted job training and new skills necessary to compete in our changing economy.

Gov. Wolf's budget contains a significant boost in funding for two of Pennsylvania's most successful, in-demand public post-secondary programs that work to meet the needs of regional and statewide employers.

We will also invest in job-linked literacy programs that build employment skills that too many workers lack and vocational rehabilitation programs that help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment.

#### Industry Partnerships

Industry Partnerships support employer-led consortiums within industry sectors in meeting training and workforce development needs.

Gov. Wolf is proposing a \$10 million boost to the current state funding for IPs. It's time we increased this vital component of workforce training. IPs train incumbent workers to move up the career ladder, opening up entry-level jobs for new workers.

Increased funding will help increase the number of targeted industry clusters, improve our data collection and reporting on outcomes and convene IPs on a regional/statewide basis to idea-share and create statewide strategies that translate back to local areas.

In the Lehigh Valley employers that participated in the diversified manufacturing IP for fiscal year 2014-15 reported a 4.25 out of 5 overall satisfaction rate; 97% reported productivity increase for their businesses; 86% reported increased profitability; 75% reported cost savings; 90% reported increased competitiveness and 68% reported an increase in safety rates – all great news for the success of IPs.

#### Current (January) Economic Situation in Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate in January was 5.1% and our rate has been steadily declining since late 2011. However, we need to do better. We need to grow jobs statewide and in the Lehigh Valley, where the unemployment rate is 5.4% and jobs are growing at about the same pace as the state. The state experienced 1.1% job growth over the past year; the Lehigh Valley experienced 1.4% growth during the same time period.

There are myriad opportunities for growth in industry sectors as diverse as healthcare, transportation & warehousing, and accommodation & food service, but we must provide the appropriate training to match job seekers with employers seeking talent.

The region's geographic location within the greater Mid-Atlantic\Northeast metropolitan corridor and its transportation infrastructure have greatly aided in the continued growth of the transportation & warehousing and wholesale trade segments of the local economy.

The arrival of the AHL Phantoms and the development of its home arena have helped spur much development in the Allentown area. The arena is more than a sports venue for the home

team AHL affiliate. It is an event center suitable for much more than hockey games; more than 200 events have been scheduled for its first year of operation.

#### Conclusion

I am proud to support the Department of Labor and Industry and Gov. Wolf to help prepare our workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow and to ensure those jobs are jobs that pay and that benefit the strengthening of our economy.

# *Pennsylvania*

*Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc.*

**Testimony presented to:  
The PA House Democratic Policy Committee  
By: Nancy Dischinat  
Executive Director  
Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc.  
March 19, 2015**

Good morning Chairman Sturla, Representative Schweyer and members of the House Democratic Policy Committee. On behalf of the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc., we are pleased that you are holding this informational hearing on Pennsylvania's workforce, economy, and the job market, and thank you for inviting me to educate and inform you about Pennsylvania's workforce system called PA Careerlink<sup>®</sup> that every day serves your constituents.

CareerLinks are governed by business and industry-led Workforce Investment Boards which operate in regional networks to implement the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and now the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The main role of a Workforce Investment Board is to plan, manage, and oversee federal, state and local funding for workforce development in communities. WIBs are responsible for connecting with economic development, bringing labor market data into community planning efforts around workforce, and connecting the workforce system with the private sector. They also serve as the clearinghouse for information on the workforce and job and labor market.

The current structure of local areas and WIBs has been effective for more than a decade. WIBs serve as strategic think tanks and innovators, consulting with policymakers, business, education, economic development, Chambers of Commerce, labor and community leaders to design solutions to best meet the workforce and training needs of our communities. Therefore, local control and design should be retained. Local elected officials and WIBs need to continue with the flexibility to collaborate on strategic and operational regional workforce development planning.

This structure enables local boards to serve as neutral conveners of private employers, local economic development organizations, higher education institutions, industry partnerships, and other civic organizations within their communities. Our dual purpose is to ensure that local employers are competitive in the global marketplace with access to a skilled workforce...your constituents... and that citizens can pursue career paths that will provide family sustaining jobs.

As a workforce practitioner I have experience about how to move our workforce from pre-K to a successful career. But I have to say that the workforce pipeline does not run continuously from Pre-K to higher education. There are many off ramps during this pipeline development, and many on ramps of people coming in and out of our workforce at all ages and all skill levels. We do not educate and train our entire workforce. They come from all over the country and world, from different backgrounds, with lots of barriers. One direction does not work. We need flexible education and training design options.

We ask that you continue to support and strengthen alignment between economic development, workforce development and education. This triangle of partners is a strong force in Pennsylvania resulting in economic growth, and a skilled and educated workforce. This triangle also needs to be squared because community partners are so valuable to our region's and Pennsylvania's success.

We appreciate the important policymaking work you do focused around workforce development, economic development and education. How can you help? Please support the PA CareerLink® workforce system in your region by being engaged and partner with us to serve your constituents. For example last year in the Lehigh Valley alone over 14,000 new job seekers enrolled in JobGateway®, Pennsylvania's on-line job matching system for job seekers and employers. On average the Lehigh Valley region has nearly 9,000 active job seekers using JobGateway®, and... 4,296, to be exact, Lehigh Valley employers posted over 3,262, to be exact, new jobs. On average in the Lehigh Valley, to be exact, 328 of your constituents use CareerLink services every single day. Out of the approximately 250 work days our workforce center was open last year, we hosted 160 job fairs. Two out of every three days during this time period an employer was recruiting at PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley. That is a workforce return on investment. How can you help? Please continue to support increasing the capabilities, usage, and marketing of the JobGateway® on-line job matching system and PA CareerLink®.

We thank the legislature for supporting Industry Partnerships in the past. We respectfully urge you to support Governor Wolf's budget proposal that dedicates \$10 million to industry partnerships to identify common workforce skill needs, and training resources for upskilling. This employer-driven, consortium approach has a proven record of increased training, improved productivity and retention of workers. How can you help? Please support the Industry Partnership resources proposed in Governor Wolf's budget.

All current and future workers must be lifelong learners to meet the increasing and changing skill demands of business and industry.

Every single day we work with employers who are either dislocating or hiring workers, and job seekers who are either underemployed, discouraged and have dropped out of the labor market, or unemployed and needs jobs. The faces of people unemployed have changed...we are the faces of people unemployed. Skilled workers with incomes that are commensurate with our education, skills and talents. Right? Work is, and will continue to be, at jobs commensurate with our education, skills and talents.

This does not always mean having a four year college degree as we begin our career...although one of our goals in workforce development is that every worker has at least an Associate's degree, and as many as possible move toward a four year degree. How can you help? Change the educational system to include community college. We need a K-14 paid system of education to ensure that we have a qualified workforce. The new high school degree is an Associate's degree. One of the best economic development tools Pennsylvania can have is an educated and qualified workforce.

A four year college degree should be available within the career path of workers, but many of the jobs today require a career and technical education. We have been training educational partners for years on high priority occupations, labor market information, career pathways, connecting youth to work experiences, linking business and industry to education and marketing the benefits of a career and technical education. How can you help? (1.) Support innovative approaches that connect school districts with industry experts to teach and illustrate how workforce preparation begins in the classroom. (2.) Increase the educational pipeline between career and technical school and community college. (3.) Institutionalize a Career Pathways Model in the education, training, literacy and workforce system with multiple entry and exit points as a strategy for building a workforce to meet business and industry's demands. (4) Help market to Pennsylvanians that the pathway to a gold collar job is through career and technical education and lifelong learning. (5.) Higher education policy must continue to support articulation agreements, the smooth transfer of credits and courses, and award credit for prior learning and work experiences. (6.) Ensure that training results in industry recognized certificates, credentials, or degrees. (7.) Understand and talk about your workforce system and invite your business leaders to get engaged in education initiatives.

Youth are a significant part of our emerging workforce. Their skills, aptitudes and preparation levels will determine Pennsylvania's ability to compete in an increasingly global marketplace. Thank you all for supporting and passing House Bill 1725 known as CareerBound introduced by Representative Mackenzie which strengthens and enhances partnerships between Pennsylvania's education system and businesses. This proposed legislation establishes a competitive pilot program that would encourage partnerships between Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), businesses and the education community. Program funding would be generated through tax credits modeled after the successful Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.

Thank you also for supporting the PA Workforce Investment Strategy Program called PA WinS under House Bill 1878 introduced by Representative Evankovich where WIBs collaborate with local businesses to address common workforce and training needs, and create Cooperative Workforce Investment Partnerships.

Please also support Senate Bill 110 introduced by Senator Lisa Boscola. This Bill provides job credits for educational training programs, connects employers with youth by providing first hand workplace experiences, develops career pathways and helps fund post-secondary school credits. How can you help? Please continue your support of these Bills.

The Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc. continues working with the Allentown School District through a U.S. Department of Education High School Graduation Initiative. Under the direction of the WIB, a Youth Workforce Coordinator known as the Jobs Lady provides employability skills, work connections, job and labor market information, training and career options, resumes, applications, social media, workshops, transportation information, linkages to community-based organizations, and helps students find a part-time job so they can stay in school.



The Workforce Coordinator is housed in the same location as the Guidance Counselor and Community College Pathways Coordinator in the Allentown School District. It is the WIB's single most effective school-to-work youth initiative focused on drop-out prevention and career awareness in our history. The data reports that none, zero, of the at risk students who met and worked with the Jobs Lady at least three times dropped out of school. How can you help? Please, please support the Governor's budget which provides \$8 million to school districts to offer college and career counseling in middle and high school in order to develop pathways for students to pursue high skill careers.

Right now everybody is in the business of workforce development...it is hot...everybody is gathering labor market information to support their efforts. What everybody needs is real time labor market data. How can you help? Continue to support the Pennsylvania Center for Workforce Information and Analysis as the focal point for real time workforce intelligence.

In closing, we support jobs creation through local control and decision making on employment and training needs, through PA CareerLinks® that provide a labor exchange between job seekers and employers, through education and training that provides a trained and skilled workforce, through Industry Partnerships that upgrade skills of the incumbent workforce, through career planning and career pathways, through career awareness and embedding workforce employability skills within education, and through the integration and alignment of workforce development, with economic development, education and the community. All geared at reinventing and re-tooling Pennsylvania's workforce for jobs.

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*Pennsylvania*

*Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc.*

Testimony of

**Dr. Mark A. Tapsak\***

Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Chief Science Officer, Zzyzx Polymers LLC

Before the

*Commonwealth of Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee*

For the hearing

**Thoughts on Gov. Tom Wolf's "Jobs that Pay" plan**

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\* Any opinion, finding, conclusion, or recommendation expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, or other organizations with which the author is affiliated.

My name is Mark Tapsak and I hold a Ph.D. in Polymer Chemistry from the University of Southern California. I am a business owner of a start-up named Zzyzx Polymers in the Bridgeworks Enterprise Center, and a university professor at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. I am very grateful to be given the opportunity to testify before you today, and would also like to thank the staff at Bridgeworks for hosting this hearing. I wish to comment on three aspects of the “Jobs that Pay” plan.

- Pro-growth business climate
- Public-private partnerships
- STEM education funding

In comparison to neighboring states, Pennsylvania is a challenging place to do business given the current tax code. That is why I am encouraged that Gov. Wolf’s plan addresses this situation head-on by proposing a significant cut to the Corporate Net Income Tax. I also applaud the intended recapitalization of the Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund and Small Business First Fund. I can assure you that when Zzyzx Polymers first applied to be a client of the Allentown Economic Development Corporation manufacturing incubator, we fully intended to utilize such loan assistance to grow our business. It was disappointing to learn shortly thereafter that a sizable portion of that fund was used in a one-time measure to balance last year’s budget.

I am delighted that Pennsylvania’s manufacturing sector is specifically mentioned within the “Jobs that Pay” plan. Pennsylvania’s manufacturing is clean, high-skill, high-wage, high-tech and currently boasts:<sup>1</sup>

- **\$57,100** Average wage (**15%** higher than all industries)
- **562,641** Employed
- **91%** Small Businesses (of over **14,500** establishments)
- **10,438** Job Postings (**217,400** all industries)
- **3.1** Multiplier effect (**1.9** for all industries)
- **227%** Increase in output of PA workers over last 40 years (**65%** for all industries)

Particularly notable is the multiplier effect which represents the total employment impact of one job created, by also including indirect and induced job creation. The dramatic worker productivity increase in this industry sector as compared to other industries demonstrates that technology and workforce education have been, and will continue to play a critical role in maintaining strong manufacturing companies.

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<sup>1</sup> Data provided by Sue Mukherjee, PASSHE Director of Program Alignment and Policy Development

Regional industry data compiled by our state's Workforce Investment Areas (WIA) shows the manufacturing industry as both growing and declining.<sup>2</sup> While this may appear to be contradictory, consider that over 90% of the manufacturing companies in our Commonwealth are small businesses. They need policies that will help them to grow and remain competitive in a global market.

The development of public-private partnerships can play a very important role in the growth of companies. I am encouraged that within the "Jobs that Pay" plan, the Governor has addressed how higher education must play a role in workforce development. At Zzyzx Polymers, we have already involved students from Bloomsburg University, Lehigh University and Lafayette College. We have leveraged the enthusiasm and creativity from a total of twelve students, and our current phase II Small Business Innovation Research grant will allow for us to hire two or three of these students full-time this summer. At Bloomsburg University, I have cultivated corporate research projects for which I then hire Bloomsburg graduates to work in entry level full-time positions, or support Ph.D. level staff researchers. With funding support from the Commonwealth, our public institutions can play a more impactful role in facilitating growth in the private sector.

Should the proposed 2015-2016 budget launch the PA Rising education and training initiatives, you can be certain that I will apply for such program funding. I consult with plastics manufacturers in close proximity to Bloomsburg University, and they have already indicated their enthusiastic participation in a program that will support work-based learning experiences as determined by the needs of the plastics industry cluster. Such public-private partnerships would play a significant role in the resurgence of manufacturing in Pennsylvania. Partnerships, both large and small, form a cornerstone of President Obama's "Educate to Innovate" initiative. With this Federal program, the President hopes to move American students from the middle to the top of the pack in science and math achievement over the next decade.<sup>3</sup>

STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) is critically important to reinvigorate the economy of our Commonwealth. Table 1 below provides a breakdown for the anticipated number of STEM and STEM related jobs that Pennsylvania will need to fill by 2018. To successfully educate our students to fill such positions, I enthusiastically endorse the proposal to restore previous funding cuts to our colleges and universities. In particular, the recommendation to fund incentives for students to pursue STEM disciplines is required to ensure that all other aspects of the "Jobs that Pay" plan will be successful. This is because each of the topics that I have addressed today are interrelated. They

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/> from WIA Fast Facts Sheets accessed 3/17/2015

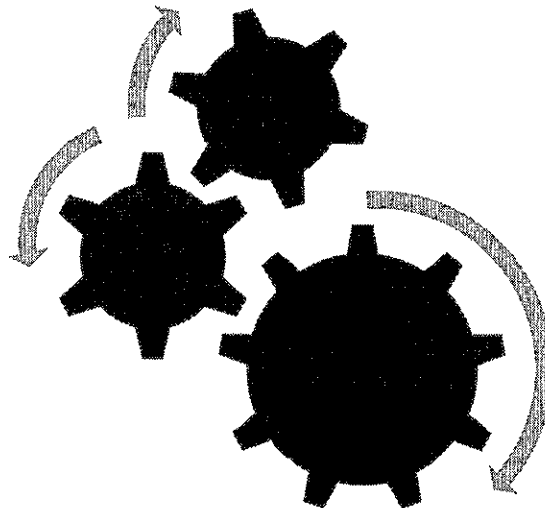
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/k-12/educate-innovate> accessed 3/18/2015

should not be considered isolated categories for which we attempt to set policy. But instead, they must be supported collectively, as their success and sustainability are highly dependent upon one another.

**Table 1.<sup>4</sup>**  
**Where will Pennsylvania’s STEM jobs be in 2018 by occupation and education level?**

	High School Graduates	Some College	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Graduate Degree	Total (in 1000s)
<b>Computer and Mathematical Science</b>	12	21	16	68	29	147
<b>Architects and Technicians</b>	2	3	6	6	2	20
<b>Engineers and Technicians</b>	8	9	12	35	16	80
<b>Life and Physical Scientists</b>	3	3	3	14	16	39
<b>Social Scientists</b>	1	2	1	7	17	28
					<b>Total</b>	<b>314</b>

In conclusion, our business climate, public-private partnerships, and STEM education could be considered to move like intermeshed gears in a machine (see Figure 1.). Their success and sustainability are dependent upon one another. Therefore, policies that support one must also include endorsements for the other two. Lastly, I should like to give my strong endorsement for the “Jobs that Pay” initiatives for which I have mentioned. I look forward to implementing those policies in my role as an educator at Bloomsburg University and a business owner in Allentown. Thank you for your attention.



**Figure 1. The intermeshing relationships of business climate, PPPs and STEM education.**

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.usinnovation.org/state/pdf\\_cvd/CVD2014Pennsylvania.pdf](http://www.usinnovation.org/state/pdf_cvd/CVD2014Pennsylvania.pdf) accessed 3/18/2015

**Testimony of Edward Balukas, President, UAW Local 677**  
3/19/15 House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing  
Allentown Economic Development Corporation

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to address the importance of improving Pennsylvania's workforce and economy.

Forty years ago the nation's top employer was General Motors providing strong wages and benefits driving the US economic engine. Today the top employer is Walmart with low wages and benefits with an economy not up to par. We went from strong middle class jobs to subsistence level jobs. In Pennsylvania last year we ranked last out of all states in job creation, a dismal performance.

The proposals in Governor Wolf's budget make competitive sense, such as reducing Corporate Net Income Tax from 9.99 to 5.99, eliminating Capital Stock and Franchise Tax, and tax credits to create good paying middle class jobs. As a member of UAW Local 677, I work at Mack Trucks and as a reminder we lost thousands of jobs to South Carolina in the late 80's and good office and engineering jobs to Virginia in 2010. Those were of course corporate decisions however, if we look at South Carolina and Virginia they offer corporate tax rates of 5% and 6% respectively. Virginia has held that tax for the last 40 years. They also have no franchise tax and offer tax credits for job creation and other incentives for businesses to move there.

The proposed budget will put Pennsylvania on an equal footing for attracting and maintaining businesses which provide good paying jobs. Economic development initiatives that encourage good job growth by providing tax credits for growing manufacturing jobs, and using the State's Industrial Resource Centers to advance manufacturing technology are key for attracting business or expanding existing manufacturing facilities like Mack. Providing \$100 million to the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority to address current and future growth needs will assist manufacturers to expand and possibly reshore components or operations that had been offshored in the past.

[MORE ON BACK]

We need to go after businesses and promote our state's best asset – the Pennsylvania worker, the best workforce there is. Other states have courted businesses especially manufacturing which provides the best job opportunities for their citizens while providing better revenue to the state due to a well-paid workforce. It is time to put Pennsylvania on equal footing to provide these all important jobs for our citizens.

As we all know infrastructure improvements have been desperately needed in Pennsylvania and also provide good jobs while bringing our transportation, water and sewer infrastructure up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century after being neglected for so long. Failing bridges can no longer be an option that is accepted or tolerated. What a great time to do infrastructure investment with the lowest interest rates to issue bonds and a workforce that is looking for good paying jobs – if not now then when? We will never have the combined bang for the buck as now with available workers and low interest rates. If we wait we lose.

Of course as workplaces become more competitive a competent educated workforce is necessary. Lean Manufacturing and Team Concepts for efficiency and responsibility within the workplace creates the need for increased skill levels, education and apprentice programs. Employer needs are driving education and training strategies that Pennsylvania must not miss out on. Business and Education partnerships will keep the Pennsylvania worker as the best asset to attract businesses and the good paying jobs that families need. We should concentrate on this job model that Business and Education Partnerships provide versus the minimum wage job that neither sustains families or the economy. Today's educated workforces provide innovation and ideas for their employers that help keep businesses competitive within their industries.

To that end education opportunities NEED to be affordable to all while targeting the specific business needs which will make Pennsylvania more attractive to businesses to relocate or expand here.

I would like to thank you again for being able to participate on moving our Commonwealth forward to a bright future.