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Congressional, Gubernatorial and Association Support of MEP

Washington, D.C. (March 17, 2006) – A bi-partisan delegation of 223 members of the U.S House of Representatives requested \$106 million in federal funding be provided to the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program for fiscal year 2007. The request letter, sponsored by the House Manufacturing Task Force, was sent to House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice and Commerce and Related Agencies on March 16, 2006.

Representatives signing the Manufacturing Task Force’s letter note: “MEP is one of the most successful federal/state partnerships in government. Manufacturing is one of our greatest economic strengths and MEP is invaluable program that helps manufacturers improve productivity and compete in the global marketplace.” In addition to the House letter, Congress further demonstrated its deep, bipartisan support for the MEP program in the recently passed fiscal 2007 Budget Resolution.

“We are grateful to Congress for its support,” said Mike Coast, Chairman of the American Small Manufacturers Coalition. “The wide bipartisan support for the program within Congress, associations and the manufacturing industry proves that the federal government would be at a loss without the 13.2 return on investment provided by MEP.”

Similar support and requests have been made by several Governors, related associations and manufacturing clients. The Governors of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin have written individual letters to the White House requesting Administration support of the MEP program. Related manufacturing associations have expressed their support as well. Within its report “The Future Success of Small and Medium Manufacturers: Challenges and Policy Issues,” the National Association of Manufacturers has included MEP its policy issue agenda and sent a letter of support to Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Mollohan. Associations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, Precision Metalforming Association, and several local chambers of commerce have submitted similar requests as well. In addition, 32 MEP clients and partners have submitted public testimony for the record to the Appropriations Subcommittee requesting funding for this critical program.

The American Small Manufacturers Coalition (ASMC), the trade association of NIST MEP Centers, has advocated for Congressional support of the program through its members and manufacturing clients. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a network of 59 centers, with over 350 locations across the country and in Puerto Rico,

providing technical assistance and business support services to America's small manufacturers. The public/private program, which served 16,448 in fiscal year 2005, report over \$721 million in cost savings directly attributed to the program's assistance as well as creating or retaining over \$4.532 billion in sales. The program also helped manufacturers create or retain 43,624 jobs and increase investment of \$941 million back into the economy based on an independent survey of 4,644 clients served by the program in federal fiscal year 2004.