

Background for Introductory Meeting with U.S. Government Official

General Background

There are roughly 12 million Americans employed directly in manufacturing, an industry which supports 17.2 million jobs in the U.S. and 12% of GDP. The National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA) represents the \$40 billion precision custom tooling and machining industry and the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA) represents a \$113-billion industry manufacturing precision metal products using stamping, fabricating, spinning, slide forming and roll forming technologies, and other value-added processes.

Introduction

- Provide general overview of industry, your company, and the role played in the economy and supply chain, particularly if automotive or defense-related. Give an update on the industry and what you see happening in the marketplace.
- How long have you been in operation, family owned, what type of industries do you serve, types of customers, etc.?
- How many employees did you have in 2008; how many now? This is important as employees = votes to elected officials.
- Specifically mention if you serve automotive, energy, medical device or any military customers.
- U.S. manufacturers face a 20% disadvantage when compared with nine major industrial countries including Germany, Japan, Canada, Mexico, and China.
- Small and medium sized manufacturers are trapped between outdated U.S. policies on issues such as taxes, trade, and regulations all while facing continued threats from illegal overseas competition.
- How are you structured? As a C Corp, S Corp, Partnership, etc.
- Since April 1, 2012, after changes by Japan, the U.S. now has the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. 81% of manufacturers are pass-through businesses such as Subchapter S Corporations paying at the individual income tax rate just increased.
- Are there specific tax provisions you use – Bonus Depreciation, Section 179 Expensing, R&D Tax Credit, LIFO, IC-DISC, Net Operating Loss, others?
- What are your annual energy costs? Are they increasing, if so, by how much?
- Are there specific burdensome and ineffective regulations you face?
- What do you see as the major obstacles to growth in your business and hiring more employees?
- Discuss if you have any job openings and how long you've had them. There are 600,000 skilled manufacturing jobs currently available in the U.S. and manufacturers are struggling to find qualified employees.

General Advice

During your conversation, you will never be expected to speak as an expert on particular aspects of bills and laws, rather you are most effective when telling "your story" and the impact these bills, laws, and regulations have on your business, family, and community.

Ask to serve as a resource when the official is facing a policy decision; they can contact you ahead of time to see how their vote or a new regulations will impact your business.