

Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke
Remarks at Manufacturing Council—Conference Call
Washington, D.C.

Thank you Fred Keller, and I want to thank all the members of the Council for your advice and service.

This Administration remains committed to a thriving manufacturing sector, which I think is evidenced by both the \$100 billion in Recovery Act funding that has been allocated to jumpstart manufacturing—as well as the tremendous personal attention the president has given this sector.

You can be assured that we're going to be carefully reviewing each of your recommendations.

The core issues you reference—greater energy independence and increased U.S. exports to China—are very much a part of this Administration's agenda.

One of President Obama's first acts in office was to sign a Recovery Act that included \$80 billion in clean energy investments.

These measures—along with others the President has made to drive tough new efficiency standards for automobiles, appliances and consumer electronics—are historic.

Development of clean energy and energy efficiency technologies could spur one of the greatest economic opportunities of the 21st century.

And it could put millions of Americans to work in high-skill, high-wage jobs.

I've just returned from Copenhagen, where I participated in the opening of the Bright Green Forum and visited the exciting displays of a number of U.S. companies that are promoting their clean energy technologies.

I walked out of this exhibition with an overwhelming feeling of optimism. Because when you see the unbelievable innovations that American companies are pioneering, you begin to understand that a clean energy economy is not a goal to be reached at some distant future.

It is here now within our reach, if only we can find the political will to grasp it.

In fact, U.S. companies have considerable advanced technology that could assist China in its clean energy transition—and I am committed to doing whatever it takes to make it easier for American companies in this and all sectors to operate there.

The U.S. and China are each other's second-biggest trading partners. In the past 20 years, U.S. exports to China have increased by a factor of 12; while U.S. imports from China have increased almost 30-fold.

At the meeting of the Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade in China in October, we discussed actions that our two countries can take to move towards a stronger, more balanced economic relationship—one built on sustainability, transparency, rule of law, and mutual benefit.

It is an agenda that we will continue to aggressively pursue.

We look forward to working with the Council to address these core issues—as well as the supporting strategies you mention: aligning our national workforce development system to the needs of manufacturers, and eliminating U.S. business cost disadvantages.

Again, I want to thank you for your time, expertise and recommendations on revitalizing American manufacturing and putting people back to work.