

Remarks at the New Market Exporter Initiative Launch with the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and FedEx

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Secretary Gary Locke

New Market Exporter Initiative Launch, Department of Commerce Building, Washington, DC

[Press Release](#)

Thank you for those kind words.

I'm proud to be joined today with leaders in U.S. manufacturing, especially:

- Governor Engler, the National Association of Manufacturers President, and his team.
- Russell Fleming, Vice President of International Marketing for FedEx, and his team of global logistics experts.
- And my US and Foreign Commercial Service Team, led by Assistant Secretary and Director General, Suresh Kumar, and the Office of Strategic Partnerships led by Adam Wilczewski.

I am also happy to have with us:

- William Bostic, Associate Director for Economic Programs at the Bureau of Census; and
- Also from Census, Nick Orsini, Chief of the Bureau's Foreign Trade Division

Everyone in this room knows that this has been a tough stretch for the American economy. And no one has been hit harder than our manufacturing sector.

But thanks to decisive action taken by this administration, we've started to see signs of recovery. We've seen 10 months of private-sector job increases. And five quarters of positive GDP growth.

Still, too many people who want work can't find it, and too many people who are working can't find enough of it.

We can't tell exactly how this recovery is to play out. But this much we know:

Manufacturing must be a big part of the solution.

It begins with the fact that manufacturing is a vital source of good family wage middle-class jobs. Consider the fact that manufacturing employees make 13 percent more than the average for all other workers.

It's no coincidence that the struggles of the American middle class have coincided with the decades long decline of America's manufacturing base. I think it's clear: the fortunes of American manufacturing and our middle-class rise and fall together.

Manufacturing is also perhaps the most significant source of American innovation -- comprising two-thirds of our nation's research and development spending.

In the last few years I think a troubling line of thinking emerged that as long as American companies owned intellectual property of a product, it didn't really matter where it was made.

But I think we're all starting to recognize the folly of that thinking.

When products are designed and manufactured side-by-side in America, businesses can discover new efficiencies and develop second-, third- and fourth-generation upgrades that would never occur in a cloistered research lab.

When they are not, we let other countries develop new businesses and jobs that only come when a company is engaged in the entire chain of innovation: from the inception of an idea to its production and sale.

For all these reasons, manufacturing must be a critical part of America's economic strategy.

President Obama has already made a significant down payment to jumpstart manufacturing, with over \$100 billion dollars worth of grants, tax cuts and incentives in the Recovery Act devoted to manufacturing investments.

At Commerce, we're working every day:

- To improve manufacturers' efficiency and sustainability;
- To help unlock the potential of promising new markets like clean energy; and
- To expand exports by increasing manufacturers' access to foreign markets.

And today I am proud to announce another step to strengthen American manufacturing.

This morning we're announcing that the National Association of Manufacturers and FedEx have pledged to work with the Commerce Department to support President Obama's National Export Initiative.

As many of you know, the Commerce Department is playing a lead role in implementing the Initiative, which aims to double American exports over the next five years, supporting two million new jobs here at home.

The reasoning behind the President's plan is simple. The more products and services we sell abroad, the more jobs we create and support right here in America.

But right now, a lot of American companies aren't exporting nearly as much as they could or should.

Consider the fact that only one percent of American companies export. And of those that do export, 58 percent only sell to one country.

The manufacturers association and FedEx are going to help change that.

The association will reach out to its members, who represent the U.S.' leading manufacturers, to encourage them to expand their exports to new markets through the Commerce Department's New Market Exporter Initiative.

Our heaviest focus in this Initiative will be on existing exporters -- because it's easier to help a company grow its share in an existing market or expand into other markets than it is to assist a company that has never exported before.

And the Commerce Department, with our network of trade specialists posted in 109 U.S. cities and 77 countries worldwide, will be a significant resource for these companies.

In fact, the Department is so committed to this program that it has stationed one of its senior commercial officers, Janice Corbett, at the manufacturers association to personally help manufacturers develop strategies to expand their export sales to new markets.

We know American businesses are unmatched in their ability to produce world-class goods and services.

Where we must improve is connecting those businesses to the 95 percent of the world's consumers who live outside our borders.

Governor Engler, you and your team, along with our partners at FedEx are going to help us take our New Market Exporter Initiative to the next level

Thank you for your leadership and now I'd like to welcome you up to talk a bit more about NAM's role in all this.

Thank you all for coming today. In this unforgiving global economy, manufactures need to do everything they can to be more competitive and more efficient and productive in everything they do.

The Obama administration and the Commerce Department stand ready to help in any way we can.

Thank you.