

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
Building a Network for Manufacturing Innovation

December 12, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to praise my colleagues, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Reed for their bipartisan work to advance the legislation we are considering this morning. The purpose of H.R. 2996 is conveyed in the legislation's title, the *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act*.

I am supportive of the legislation and its purpose to revitalize American manufacturing because I strongly believe that if the United States is to remain competitive in the long-term, we need to ensure that American companies maintain their capacity to manufacture innovative products here at home.

The key to maintaining this capacity is through strategic investments in advanced manufacturing research, development, and education.

While the United States is struggling to sustain its competitive edge other countries are focusing their full attention on manufacturing. They are implementing the policies and programs necessary to build 21st century economies now. We simply cannot afford to stand on the sideline and watch our competitors pass us by. A vibrant manufacturing sector is just too important.

That is why, earlier this year I introduced the *Advancing Innovative Manufacturing Act of 2013* – or the *AIM Act*. My legislation also brings the public and private sectors together to tackle the research needs of industry. Additionally, the AIM act focuses on ensuring small and medium-sized manufacturers have the tools they need to innovate.

Because the decline of U.S. manufacturing is a threat to middle class jobs and our economy, the Democratic discussion draft of the America Competes Reauthorization Act includes a number of manufacturing-related provisions. In fact, the proposal we are considering today is a part of that discussion draft.

We need our manufacturing sector to be the most sophisticated in the world, using transformative technologies and manufacturing processes. By doing this, we can maintain our global leadership. I am hopeful that as this Committee considers the reauthorization of NSF, NIST, and DOE's Office of Science we can come together across the aisle to include policies that will stimulate American manufacturing and American jobs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I yield back the balance of my time.