



March 20, 2018

**TESTIMONY ON:** *SB 444, "An Act Concerning Advanced Manufacturing Training And The Capital Needs Of The Submarine Industry"*

**TESTIMONY TO:** Commerce Committee

**POSITION:** Supports

**PROVIDED BY:** John Beauregard, President/CEO  
Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board

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Good morning Senator Hartley, Senator Frantz, Representative Simmons, and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee.

My name is John Beauregard, and I am the President of the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board. Today, however, I not only represent the East but also each of the five (5) Workforce Boards statewide known as the CT Workforce Development Council. Collectively, we build the skills in our workforce and align those skills to the hiring needs of our employers. I'm pleased to support Senate Bill 444, which provides funding for Connecticut's workforce boards statewide to administer advanced manufacturing training programs using the "*Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative*" (MPI) prototype we have piloted successfully in Eastern Connecticut.

For those unaware of our Pipeline program in Eastern CT, the federal government funded our prototype development for this program, which we launched two years ago. Our concept was straightforward - engage employers to design the vetting and classroom design while engaging the community to deliver the training and worker supports. The training class curriculum is customized to the hiring needs and job trades of employers. Since the program eliminates duplication and fragmentation, its efficient design has bound employers, organized labor, colleges, high schools, economic & state agencies, and others in a "*unity of purpose.*" Strong community engagement is the "*secret sauce*" to successful workforce development.

The program is fortunate to receive great support from the Eastern CT Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA), a 68-member consortium of manufacturers. Electric Boat has been leading the way amongst these employers but 137 different employers that have hired from the program indicate its reach in our community and potential reach if scaled properly statewide. We are proud of the fact

that more than 90% of our skills training attendees receive a job offer immediately upon graduation. This result is due to the strong employer engagement in the design and execution of this program, including the training curriculum. The Pipeline program is a true “*public-private*” partnership. The MPI develops the job skills in program enrollees to improve employability potential. The employers, upon hiring these same individuals, invest considerably more over the next several decades to further training and career development.

I want to highlight a few outcomes from the pilot that have been achieved thus far, in less than two years:

- More than **5,600** individuals have applied for the program, or 467% more than anticipated by the federal grant;
- We have placed more than **900** people in employment;
- Using standard economic multipliers, this performance translates into **~2,100 jobs** and **\$60 million in wage income**. The program has a very favorable ROI.
- The program has completed **35** skills training classes six months faster than anticipated, a signal of employer demand for these trainees.

Two simple factors underscore SB 444’s importance to scale the Pipeline statewide:

- The First is Demand – Connecticut’s flagship manufacturers (*Electric Boat, Pratt & Whitney, and Sikorsky*) will each hire several thousand workers over the next decade, and their suppliers will need to expand to support this growth.
- The Second Factor is Supply – The Post-Recession recovery has reached the point where manufacturers have hired most qualified and experienced applicants available. States must develop and scale innovative strategies to ensure productivity from “*green*” and inexperienced workers to fuel future economic growth.

With federal funding for the MPI ending this year, Senate Bill 444 gives the state a mechanism to sustain and expand the Manufacturing Pipeline model. SB 444 makes sense in a challenging state budget environment by leveraging existing systems, including the technical high schools, the community college Advanced Manufacturing Centers (*AMC*), and the public workforce system’s network of American Job Centers. The MPI has shown the potential of the Job Centers – which serve tens of thousands of Connecticut residents each year – as a resource to vet, re-purpose, and quickly train people to meet the high-volume needs of employers. Our classes leverage previous state investment in the facilities and equipment in the state college and high school system, such as state-of-the-art welding labs and the AMCs. Even our instructors were leveraged from industry retirees, serving as subject matter experts to support our students.

SB 444 has the potential to create the framework for handling entry-level hiring needs by replicating an evidence-based model (*Pipeline*) that uses current infrastructure to train the high volume needs of CT industries by raising the baseline of skills in accordance with employer-tailored demand and curriculum. This is an exciting opportunity for the State of Connecticut.

Thank you.



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**Testimony of Dr. Kelli-Marie Vallieres, In Support Of Proposed Senate Bill 444**

**“An Act Concerning Advanced Manufacturing Training And The Capital Needs Of The Submarine Industry”**

Good Morning Senator Hartley, Senator Frantz, Representative Simmons, and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Kelli Vallieres, and I am President of the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA). EAMA is a non-profit organization comprised of manufacturers in eastern Connecticut, south central Massachusetts, and northwest Rhode Island. EAMA promotes manufacturing careers and development and advances in manufacturing education, while working with its education and training partners to improve the regional manufacturing workforce. EAMA also creates a platform for its diverse group of 68 member companies - which employ more than 13,000 workers - to speak with one voice to advance the region's manufacturing agenda. EAMA advances its mission to strengthen the regional advanced manufacturing industry by harnessing the collective energy of regional manufacturers through career awareness, workforce development, advocacy, and member education activities. EAMA partners with regional community colleges and technical high schools and the public workforce system to increase the capacity and industry-relevance of the region's primary manufacturing training and educational programs.

I am writing in support of SB 444, “An Act Concerning Advanced Manufacturing Training And The Capital Needs Of The Submarine Industry.”

There are several features of the bill which address critical needs, important to our industry as well as our region and state achievement of economic growth. First, the bill will successfully help to sustain the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative and creates the potential to expand this important program to other industries and geographies in the state. This Initiative has successfully supported our employers to find both a quantity and quality of workers over the past couple of years. It has the potential to be replicated in other parts of the state. Second, the bill creates further facility capacity in the region (at Three Rivers Community College). There is high demand from manufacturers for training facilities that duplicate working conditions, including mock-ups and industry models. This facility as mentioned in this bill has the potential to serve this need for a variety of manufacturing sub-sectors. Third, the bill creates the basis for a dialogue between industry and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) via an ongoing assessment of the capital needs of businesses related to submarine construction. This assessment will include many EAMA companies, furthering our dialogue and relationship with DECD. Finally, the bill successfully refers activity and responsibility to the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board, an organization which serves as the administrative headquarters of EAMA and in which our member companies have trust and confidence.

For these reasons, I support this bill.

Thank you for your work. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

**“Manufacturing a Path to Success”**



## WESTMINSTER TOOL INC.

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### **Testimony for Public Hearing on Proposed Senate Bill 444: “An Act Concerning Advanced Manufacturing Training and the Capital Needs of the Submarine Industry”**

**Submitted By:** *Raymond Coombs, Jr., President, Westminster Tool –and-  
Vice President, Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA)*

March 20, 2018

Members of the Commerce Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Proposed Senate Bill No. 444: An Act Concerning Advanced Manufacturing Training and the Capital Needs of the Submarine Industry.

My name is Raymond Coombs, and I am President of Westminster Tool, and the Vice-President of the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA). While EAMA’s purpose is to strengthen the regional advanced manufacturing industry by harnessing the collective energy of local manufacturers, for the past several years I have, under the sponsorship of EAMA, convened a nine-employer group of plastics manufacturers seeking to grow in Connecticut. These employers include:

- Westminster Tool Inc.
- Foster Corporation
- Web Industries
- Putnam Plastics
- Ensinger Precision Components
- Plaspak Inc.
- Dymotek
- Flextronics
- Wepco Plastics, INC.

The financial support outlined in SB 444 Section one (b) will aide in the continued success of the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, an initiative of which EAMA is a founding partner. Section two of SB 444 will provide the opportunity to establish a plastics focused training program, an initiative sorely needed amongst our manufacturing members. Our EAMA-sponsored consortium of nine Plastics manufacturers researched the feasibility of starting such a program. That work has determined that there is a strong support from industry to implement a program of this magnitude at a local community college.

The aggregate growth in sales revenue stemming from new hires for the nine companies is 20.0%. Presently 23.0% of current employees of the nine companies are aged 55 or older; thus companies will have to contend with growth, attrition, and retirement in order to balance their workforce. Collectively, the companies have committed to regularly sending cohorts of incumbent workers to courses in a redeveloped Plastics program. With regards to the Credentials



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– Form and Function, the nine companies had a common and consistent voice. Besides the principle need of a college credit Plastics certificate and degree, the coalition members prioritized flexible-delivery format for coursework and lean manufacturing integration into the coursework.

This legislation will help to provide key funding to continue the growth of Connecticut's Manufacturing Industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and I hope that the Commerce Committee votes favorably upon this legislation.