

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 5, 2014

The Honorable Matt S. Erskine
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Erskine:

We are writing to express our support for the University of California, Riverside (UCR) Proposal for Designation as a “Manufacturing Community” (Docket No. 131121981-3981) in preparation for future federal investments through the Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP). The Inland Empire Manufacturing Community described in the attached proposal offers the infrastructure and manufacturing strength, supplier networks, workforce, innovation ecosystem, private and government partnership and leadership to maximally benefit from a Manufacturing Community designation.

In the center of this development is the lead institution, the University of California, Riverside (UCR) and its Center for Economic Development & Innovation (CEDI), which has demonstrated previous and ongoing leadership in coordinating economic development and innovation based activities within the Inland Empire. This includes earning a recent designation from the State of California as one of 12 Innovation Hubs. UCR’s research and education activity will contribute directly to technical innovation, which will increase efficiencies, economies, and product development.

The City of Ontario also boasts a medium-hub, full service airport (ONT) with commercial jet service to major US cities and through service to international destinations. In 2012, 4.3 million passengers used the airport and 454,880 tons of airfreight was shipped. ONT is also the center of a developing freight movement system that includes the airport, two railroads, four major freeways, and an expanding network of freight forwarders. ONT is served by U.S. airfreight carriers including Ameriflight, Empire, FedEx, Kalitta, UPS, and West Air.

Beyond this, the Inland Empire is also a thriving “Makers Community,” that serves as an incubator for entrepreneurship. In Murrieta and Temecula, government buildings have been converted into inexpensive space for new companies to rent so they can grow their businesses. In Riverside, companies are beginning to offer makerspace access to students to explore and develop their creativity while allowing small startups access to advanced manufacturing tools.

The Manufacturing Community offers significant opportunities for fruitful federal investment by the IMCP agencies and will leverage committed future investments and economic development projects underway. Please accept our enthusiastic recommendation of the proposed designation of the Inland Empire as a Manufacturing Community.

Sincerely,



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



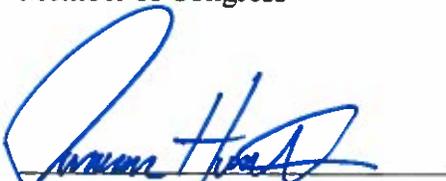
Ken Calvert
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Gloria Negrete McLeod
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Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress

cc: Mr. Ryan Hedgepeth, Office of Performance and National Programs, Economic Development Administration