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The Association For  
Manufacturing Technology

*Over 100 Years of Building Global Productivity*

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October 5, 2010

The Honorable Donald Manzullo  
415 South Mulford Road  
Rockford, IL 61108

Dear Congressman Manzullo:

I am writing on behalf of AMT – The Association For Manufacturing Technology in support of Rockford’s bid to locate the third campus of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at the Rockford International Airport. The Rockford location has the greatest potential to impact the aeronautical industry and its manufacturing base because of its close proximity to a cluster of manufacturing technology companies and local resources. These companies stand ready to work with Embry-Riddle on a science and technology program that will not only improve Illinois’ manufacturing sector but also U.S. competitiveness in this important field.

AMT represents over 400 U.S. suppliers of manufacturing technology and systems that build virtually every product – with over 60 companies located in Illinois. Our members cover the full range of engineering and manufacturing capabilities – from product innovation and design to assembly and installation service – for a diverse range of technologies and industries, including aerospace. Our workforce is comprised of highly-skilled engineers, tool and die makers, mechanics, electricians, application engineers, and managers – the majority of whom work for companies that are small businesses.

It is getting more and more difficult to find workers with the skills our rapidly-changing world demands, but it is absolutely necessary to innovation and economic growth. AMT’s Manufacturing Mandate calls for a long-term national strategy to revitalize the U.S. manufacturing sector, involving all stakeholders – governments, schools, business leaders and their workers. One of the Mandate’s top priorities is building a skilled workforce or “smartforce” around manufacturing innovation centers, such as Rockford. The closer the schools are to the industries they serve, the more the stakeholders can work together toward a common goal of America’s global leadership in products and people.

New and emerging manufacturing technologies, especially in industries critical to national security such as aerospace, depend on the people that create them and know how to use them. That is why prestigious schools, such as Embry-Riddle, are so important. It is equally important to locate these schools in communities where their resources can best be utilized and nurtured. Access to the interns and graduates of schools, such as Embry-Riddle, help our companies grow with new ideas. Our companies, in turn, support these schools through joint education programs and curriculum development aimed at meeting the demands of our changing workplaces. There is maximum multiplier effect with this type of relationship in place.

AMT looks forward to working with the students and faculty at Embry-Riddle in Rockford. Good luck with the effort to bring this outstanding school to your district!

Regards,

Douglas K. Woods  
President