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Monday, March 7, 2016

Testimony – SB 383 An Act Concerning Technical High School System

My name is Cyndi Zoldy and I am the Executive Director of the Smaller Manufacturers' Association of Connecticut. The SMA is a membership organization representing 150 member companies and approximately 6,000 employees located in the Greater Waterbury area and statewide.

I wish to give my testimony in support of SB 383 – An Act Concerning the Technical High School System.

The SMA currently supports three local technical high schools, Kaynor in Waterbury, Oliver Wolcott in Torrington and Wilcox in Meriden. We offer instructor support with material, equipment and SMA company representation at open houses and exploratory open houses for parents. The SMA attends TTAC meetings and also offer student support with awarding students "Student of the Month and Student of the Year" recognition along with monetary awards. This is just part of what the SMA does with these schools. The technical high school manufacturing program are deserving of qualified teachers. Streamlining the process of hiring manufacturing and STEM instructors will allow experienced teachers to share manufacturing knowledge with young students interested in the field.

Connecticut manufacturing is vital to its economy offering a higher per job multiplier than any other sector. Manufacturing today has significant challenges with its workforce, the need for highly skilled workforce is immediate.

With the Governors investment of the Manufacturing Innovation Fund, it is critical we do not stop the forward movement – we need to make technical high schools available at night to students/employees for incumbent worker training. We need to take advantage of existing facilities and provide internal movement, up the career ladder, for younger employees.

I urge your support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share the SMA's view of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia A. Zoldy', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Cynthia A. Zoldy