

## (September 14, 2006) Young Manufacturers Ask Lawmakers to Fight for the Industry

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### Young manufacturers ask lawmakers to fight for industry

A group of 40 young manufacturers from companies across the United States visited Washington September 13 to urge lawmakers and the Bush Administration to back an "Agenda for the Future of Manufacturing in America." Known as the Next Generation of Manufacturers, the group comprises managers and future company leaders in their 20s and 30s of steel-consuming companies that produce parts for auto suppliers, appliance makers and other industrial customers. Many are the second and third generation of owners of businesses that have been in operation for decades.

The group visited the offices of more than 50 lawmakers in an effort to build momentum for their agenda, which includes support for issues key to the future of the sector, such as an end to China currency manipulation, support for Small Business Health Plans, establishing consumer standing in trade cases, and repeal of the estate tax.

At a press conference held on Capitol Hill, the young manufacturers were joined by Rep. Donald Manzullo (R-Illinois), chairman of the Small Business Committee and co-founder of the House Manufacturing Caucus; Rep. Thaddeus McCotter (R-Michigan); and Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-Illinois).

"Although our manufacturers are doing much better these days, they still face severe challenges from low-wage overseas competitors," said Rep. Manzullo. "I join today with this new generation of manufacturers to urge my colleagues to support legislation that will make American companies more competitive. We have the most qualified workers in the world who can compete with anyone as long as they are on a level playing field."

Also speaking at the press conference were Carl "Chip" Michaelsen, age 35, president of ODM Tool & Manufacturing of McCook, Ill.; and Jeanne Swanson, age 26, director of public relations at E & E Manufacturing of Plymouth, Mich.

"Our families have for generations poured our hearts and souls into our businesses," said Michaelsen, who, with his brother and sister, currently operates the business founded by their grandfather 60 years ago. "In the steel-using manufacturing sector alone, we provide good jobs at good wages for more than 12 million American workers nationwide. Our impact on the American economy deserves greater recognition here in Washington, and we call on our elected officials to re-commit themselves to our industries."

"Like me, many of my colleagues' fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, grandparents and great-grandparents operated manufacturing facilities that have been the backbone of America for decades," said Swanson, the fourth generation of her family to work in the metalforming industry. "We formed this group because we have a choice: We can sit back and watch others fight for the future of manufacturing in this country, or we can take the matter into our own hands."

The Next Generation of Manufacturers represents companies that are members of the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA), the full-service trade association representing the \$41 billion metalforming industry of North America - the industry that creates precision metal products using stamping, fabricating and other value-added processes. Its nearly 1,200 member companies include metal stampers, fabricators, spinners, slide formers and roll formers as well as suppliers of equipment, materials and services to the industry. Members are located in 30 countries, with the majority found in North America - in 41 states of the United States as well as Canada and Mexico.

Additional information on PMA and the Next Generation of Manufacturers can be found at <http://www.metalformingadvocate.org/>.