

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000  
202/463-5310

October 4, 2007

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

As you prepare to debate H.R. 3093, the “Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008,” the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, respectfully asks you support the Appropriations Committee’s recommended \$110 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program (MEP). The Chamber also urges you to support the administration’s full requests for the Department of Commerce’s Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The MEP program helps manufacturers become more competitive by improving their productivity, leveraging private sector investments and assisting the U.S. industrial base to become an innovative high tech global competitor. On behalf of all small to medium sized U.S. manufacturers, the Chamber urges you to support \$110 million in H.R. 3093 for the Department of Commerce’s MEP program.

Funding for the Census Bureau and the upcoming 2010 Decennial Census is at a critical crossroads. The Chamber strongly urges you to fully fund the administration’s request for the U.S. Census Bureau for FY2008. These requests provide for preparation of the 2010 Decennial Census and upcoming “dress rehearsals,” implementation of the American Community Survey (ACS), and collection of vital economic and social data.

In addition, the Chamber encourages funding for a 2010 Census Partnership Program, which was not reflected in the president’s request. This program would help ensure a more complete and accurate count of the nation’s population by assisting in such critical activities as reviewing and updating the Bureau’s address list, encouraging people to participate in the census, and recruiting temporary census employees.

Adequate funding for these Census activities is crucial. The resulting data is heavily relied upon by government and business alike in their plans for the future, and proper funding to do a quality job producing that data is essential.

In addition to meeting the Census Bureau’s funding needs, the Chamber strongly urges you to support full funding for BEA. By meeting BEA’s requirements, it can continue its critical work to improve the quality and depth of important economic data. This commitment will also

allow BEA to improve accuracy of GDP estimates, speed up the release of regional statistics, and provide business investment data on an annual basis.

The Chamber also supports fully funding the administration's request for the NASA and the NOAA.

Accordingly, the Chamber urges you to support these key initiatives during consideration of H.R. 3093.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail.

R. Bruce Josten