

**Remarks Prepared for Jay Timmons
President and CEO, National Association of Manufacturers
State of Manufacturing Tour: Tampa, Fla.
Port Tampa Bay
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Good evening, and thank you for having me. After the recent blizzard, it's great to be here rather than in the cold of Washington, D.C.

More importantly, I am honored to have been invited to visit the bustling Port Tampa Bay. Your facility embodies what the National Association of Manufacturers is all about...the commerce that drives our economy and our nation.

It's a privilege to see it in action. And to be in Florida, where your governor, Rick Scott, has declared 2016, "The year of the manufacturer."

And I also want to thank Tom [Feeney], for his vital partnership and tireless help on our tour,...as well as Paul [Anderson], and Ryan [Patmintra]—for also making this event possible and for being a part of our roundtable earlier this afternoon.

We're also grateful to see many local and state leaders have joined us as well.

I'm here today to share with you the State of Manufacturing in the United States.

Now, why manufacturing? It's simple really. It's because the strength of manufacturing in America is responsible for the success of America in the world. That is an indisputable fact. When manufacturing succeeds, America succeeds.

That may sound counterintuitive to some, and it belies the picture some would like to paint: that manufacturing means things of the past—old, gritty factories, simple tools and rudimentary machines.

If that's the image the word "manufacturing" conjures in your mind, then come with me, ladies and gentlemen. It's time to introduce you to modern manufacturing.

The NAM, the unified voice of manufacturing in America, has more than 14,000 members—from world-recognized brands to family-owned small businesses, and we are the voice of more than 12 million working men and women, their families, and the communities they build. Just a

quick look at some of our members' work will show you: modern manufacturing touches every aspect of our lives.

Already today I visited Sun Hydraulics in Sarasota—a company pioneering the advancement of fluid power. And then I took a tour here in Tampa of Bristol-Myers Squibb's state-of-the-art North American Capabilities Center, which is furthering innovation and excellence.

Innovative manufacturing is everywhere, across America and in the Sunshine State.

From Ryder System's strides in alternative fuel solutions and energy efficiency...

...to the sustainable infrastructure developed by CSX.

From Rayonier Advanced Materials' development of high-value ethers that enable the development of slow release medications...

...to Amgen or Bayer's research and production of cancer-fighting and life-improving drugs.

We're talking about everything from the precision metal-formed parts produced by Hialeah Metal Spinning...

...to the vast new world of the Internet of Things, where everyday objects are now digitally interconnected by the web.

First it was our phones. Then it was our thermostats, our watches, our cars. Soon it will be everything from our contact lenses to our entire homes...from smart wall board, to autonomous automobiles to transcontinental pipelines.

Companies like Jabil are making the "digital home" a reality. And thanks to companies like Honeywell, for example, you can control your home security, lighting and energy management with the touch of a button from around the world.

That's the Internet of Things...and that's modern manufacturing.

By the year 2020, 26 billion objects will be linked together by the Internet. Manufacturing is truly changing everything...and all these things are changing America and changing our lives.

And that is why, today, manufacturing in the United States is leading an innovation revolution—a revolution that will win us jobs, raise standards of living and restore our mantle of leadership around the world.

Right now, more than 12 million people across the country work in manufacturing, and our sector contributes more than \$2 trillion to national GDP. If U.S. manufacturing were its own country, it would be the ninth-largest economy in the world.

Here in Florida, manufacturing adds about \$41 billion to the state economy.

And get this important data point: For every dollar spent in manufacturing, another \$1.40 is added to the economy. It's why manufacturing—more than any other sector—improves our way of life and builds communities.

So, you see, the state of manufacturing matters. It matters for the state of our union.

Every day across this country, manufacturers go to work, competing to win. New technologies, affordable energy and world-leading productivity have given the United States a competitive advantage in the global marketplace. But obstacles are still in our way to forging an economy that lives up to our people and the potential we can unleash.

Unavoidable headwinds, like global economic weakness and worldwide instability, have roiled manufacturing. While these challenges will be slow to change, our leaders right here in our own country have, at this moment, the power to fix other self-imposed barriers to opportunity. They can fix policies in Washington that imperil our promise.

These barriers exist because Washington hasn't yet summoned the will to change them. And because "We The People," in some ways, haven't done enough to fight for manufacturing as essential to American Exceptionalism and our future.

Just as "American Idol" is entering its final season this year, it's also time to stop selecting political candidates based on how they sound, rather than what they can actually do for manufacturing and our country.

Of course, if you listen to the candidates who are out campaigning today, they all embrace manufacturing and pledge their support—at least rhetorically. The same is true of our leaders in Congress.

But words alone don't build the right business environment or produce a skilled workforce. We need the right public policy agenda for that.

At the NAM, we want to make it easy on our leaders. We're spelling it out with exactly the right policies for manufacturers to compete and win—for America to compete and win.

We have just released our 2016 Agenda for Economic Growth and American Exceptionalism, and we're travelling the country to get the word out.

“Competing to Win” is an agenda that is guided by four core values that also happen to be foundational principles of this country that we love.

The first of these is free enterprise: powerful market forces that drive innovation and growth better than any system ever conceived in the history of mankind.

The second is competitiveness: our ability to expand markets and succeed in the global economy.

The third is individual liberty: the creativity and entrepreneurship unleashed by protecting and advancing the basic freedoms enshrined in our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

And the fourth, equal opportunity: our shared belief that every one of us, if given the chance, has the potential to contribute to the success of our companies and our communities.

Every policy proposal supports these principles, which are also the values that have made and that will keep America exceptional.

The agenda details how policymakers can help our industry, our economy and our country reach our full potential.

We zero in on 11 key areas:

- tax;
- trade;
- energy;
- environment;
- transportation and infrastructure;
- labor;
- immigration;

- workforce;
- healthcare;
- research, innovation and technology; and
- regulatory and legal reform.

Our message is this: if a candidate really wants to be a manufacturing president, this is the agenda.

If Congress wants to energize the manufacturing economy, this is the legislative checklist.

And, if you want to be a manufacturing voter, this is your guide to the issues that affect your livelihood and our families.

There are more topics than we have time for right now, so I will focus on two that are relevant today at Port Tampa Bay: trade and labor policy.

Here at Florida's largest cargo port, we are witness to the benefits of international commerce. Overseas trade is a big part of why this port can support 80,000 jobs and add \$15 billion to the economy.

It is also a big part of manufacturing's future.

That's why our trade agenda has to be robust and forward-leaning. We can't rely on the U.S. market as the sole source of growth when 95 percent of our potential customers live outside our borders. We need to kick down long-standing trade barriers to open markets abroad, in order to create jobs at home. And then we need to get to work improving our own U.S. rules to promote greater U.S. competitiveness and access overseas.

Right now, the U.S. has free trade agreements with only 20 countries. These partners represent less than 6 percent of the world's population...yet they purchase nearly half of all U.S. manufacturing exports.

Every year we sell \$60 billion more in manufactured goods to these countries than we buy from them. Where we don't have agreements, we're running a trade deficit exceeding \$500 billion.

Our competitors understand what's at stake...maybe better than some of our own leaders. Other major economies are busy negotiating dozens of agreements without the United States—and they are already putting our manufacturers and workers at a disadvantage in some overseas markets.

To keep pace, let alone get ahead, we must seize much more aggressively the opportunities available to us.

Among the most important are the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Together, they could open markets with nearly 1 billion consumers responsible for almost two-thirds of global spending.

In November, President Obama released the final TPP document—more than 5,000 pages codifying the common ground painstakingly identified by 12 disparate nations. After careful analysis, the NAM announced our support for the agreement—because it will help open markets for American products and create jobs here *at home*. It will also ensure that the United States, not our competitors, is helping to write the rules of international trade.

Unfortunately, some politicians didn't wait to read the language before issuing their condemnations. While we understand there are principled concerns about the agreement, knee-jerk opposition and political gamesmanship won't strengthen our competitiveness or put more people to work.

As Congress debates TPP, we should urge our lawmakers to support it. We should continue working with the EU toward a comprehensive Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

And, we need to work more aggressively to secure an ambitious Environmental Goods Agreement. Lowering tariffs on 86 percent of global trade in environmental technologies would be a huge win for our economy, manufacturing jobs and our quest for sustainability.

It's also time to pass legislation that will modernize our border customs activities to facilitate trade through Port Tampa Bay and ports across our nation. Legislation ready to move in the Senate will do just that and improve trade enforcement.

We must make sure that all of our trading partners, and the United States itself, truly implement their trade commitments. Unfair trade, the theft of U.S. intellectual property and other barriers continue to undermine manufacturers in the United States and our opportunities overseas. The United States must lead by example and ensure that countries from China to India, and South Africa to Brazil respect the rules of the international trading system.

Increased trade will strengthen our global standing. But to seize these new opportunities, we need the best and most productive workplaces in the world.

Regrettably, labor laws do not currently reflect the dynamics of modern manufacturing.

The 21st century workplace must incentivize employees to remain in the manufacturing sector. Compensatory time off, flexible work arrangements—these are contemporary ideas that work.

Now over the past seven years, we've seen some regulations from the National Labor Relations Board that are doing the exact opposite...making doing business more expensive and hiring workers more difficult.

But it's understandable when you have members of the powerful board who have never run a business and had to grow jobs.

It's time to reestablish longstanding precedents with respect to union organizing.

The U.S. should reverse course on ambush union elections. Mere days between a union's bid for certification and the workers' vote is not enough time for employees to make an informed choice—especially about an issue so central to their livelihoods.

We should revisit the size of collective bargaining units. Recent changes have allowed unions to form on the smallest scale, even when there is overwhelming opposition among the majority of employees...and that's just not right.

Our companies and our country will be best served by a collaborative approach on workplace issues. Employers and employees—and their union representatives if they so choose—can together chart the best course for growth, innovation and American exceptionalism.

And ultimately, that's what all of this is about—empowering us to pioneer the future.

So in addition to getting it right on trade and labor, we also need to address those other important areas:

That means reforming the tax code, so that America no longer has the highest corporate tax rate among developed nations or taxes on small businesses that stifle entrepreneurship and success.

It means our leaders should support the use of all our diverse energy sources—instead of picking and choosing—to keep our energy supply reliable and affordable.

We also have to strike a balance between our laudable ambitions for the environment and what's commercially feasible—so that manufacturers can continue helping America to be an economic and environmental leader.

We need to build on last year's surface transportation bill—and address other persistent infrastructure issues facing our ports and inland waterways. Manufacturers in the next few weeks will be in front of Congress, testifying on the need for Water Resources Reform and Development Act reauthorization.

As a nation of immigrants, it's time to fix all parts of our broken system to boost our economy and fulfil a moral obligation to stay true to our values.

To address the growing skills gap, we have to empower workers with the talents and education that equip them for those in-demand, well-paying manufacturing jobs.

And we need to reduce the burden on workers' families by truly reducing healthcare costs.

Our laws must protect the products of manufacturers' research and development and encourage innovation—so that we can continue to improve people's quality of life.

And finally, we must fix our broken regulatory and legal systems—which are too expensive and complicated, especially for small manufacturers.

Moving forward on these priorities, all of which are outlined in much greater detail in our agenda, is about helping real people build better lives.

To offer the mom living in Clearwater a job to provide for her children today and her retirement tomorrow...

To give the family in Cape Coral the chance to advance and raise their standard of living...

To ensure the veteran coming home to St. Petersburg can enjoy the freedom she defended for all of us overseas...

And to give communities across this state and this country a foundation for growth and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Throughout America's history, manufacturers have made our country stronger by the people we employ, the lives we touch and the products we make.

Today, building a stronger country requires something else—bringing the right leaders together to get the job done. We need to elect and support people who believe in solutions—and those four foundational principles: free enterprise, competitiveness, individual liberty and equal opportunity.

You know, leading our great nation is about more than who can yell the loudest, or who can denigrate others most, or who can express the least desire to work across ideological lines.

No, true leadership that is worthy of the promise of America brings out the best in all of us. A great leader appeals to our aspirations as a people. A great leader unites. He or she doesn't divide.

That is why manufacturers are raising our collective voices—the more than 12 million voices in the Manufacturing Army—to speak out...and take a stand. We need you to join us—to question candidates, and to vote for those who support real solutions and real leadership.

We're manufacturers. We make things—incredible, life-changing things. And now, it's up to us to make a difference again—for the future of our country.

Thank you so much.