Energy: Strengthening Manufacturing by Capitalizing on U.S. Energy Leadership

The U.S. is the world’s leading energy producer, creating a major advantage for manufacturers in the global marketplace. Today, manufacturers utilize and benefit from all forms of energy—oil, natural gas, coal, nuclear and renewables—while making smart investments to become more energy efficient and protect the environment. Meanwhile, manufacturers are developing more technologies that make energy more affordable, reliable and cleaner with each passing year. Manufacturers are leading the way in finding innovative ways to harness U.S. energy, and the right federal policies can significantly aid and advance that progress. The combined upstream, midstream and downstream unconventional oil and gas production processes—as well as the chemical industry benefiting from them—are projected to support more than 460,000 manufacturing jobs by 2020, rising to nearly 515,000 by 2025.

Despite the progress the industry has made, it still faces many challenges. Historically, the federal government has been inconsistent in its support for domestic energy development. Policymakers have not advanced a comprehensive plan that ensures an energy future with continued certainty for manufacturers. In recent years, the federal government has also used regulations to favor or disfavor certain fuels. This year-by-year instability makes it difficult for manufacturers to make long-term energy investments and capitalize on the nation’s energy advantage. The future of the manufacturing industry and our country’s energy security rely on clarity and certainty from policymakers. With a renewed commitment to America’s energy renaissance and a dedication to advancing new technologies that improve energy efficiency and support domestic energy production, the United States can continue to lead the world on energy for years to come.
The strength of manufacturing is in large part a result of the United States’ energy resources and innovative technologies that are unmatched by any other nation in the world. America’s energy advantage creates the ability—and lawmakers can create the conditions—for businesses to succeed, and manufacturers will continue doing our part to constantly diversify our energy portfolio.”

—Karl G. Glassman, Chairman and CEO, Leggett & Platt, Incorporated

Actions for Leaders to Take:

- Remove regulatory barriers that slow access and improvements to the variety of energy resources.
- Repair the broken permitting process for energy projects to minimize delays and reduce litigation.
- Expedite the legal and regulatory processes for exporting energy technologies.
- Provide access to federal lands for responsible energy exploration.
- Support measures to enhance the deployment of energy-efficient technologies in the public and private sectors.
- Provide for a reliable electric grid that ensures manufacturers can access energy when they need it, even as policies and markets change.

An Energy Agenda for the Future Must:

- Recognize that the U.S. is globally unique and has the potential to chart an energy future that benefits the entire nation, not just some regions.
- Ensure access to domestic and overseas markets so that fuels and technologies are developed here and marketed around the world.
- Prioritize technology and innovation to ensure manufacturers have access to reliable and affordable energy while the grid evolves, air quality improves and greenhouse gases are reduced.
- Provide manufacturers with the certainty that energy investments they make today will not be phased out before the end of their useful lives.