



Leo W. Gerard
International President

December 1, 2011

VIA FAX

Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall II
Rayburn House Office Building, Rm. 2307
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Rahall:

I write on behalf of the 850,000 active members of the United Steelworkers in support of your strong bill improving and expanding the reach of Buy America with the "*Invest in American Jobs Act of 2011*."

America's most urgent economic challenge is the jobs crisis. Critical to moving America forward and growing jobs is meeting our infrastructure needs. No country can expect to compete or survive for long in today's tough competitive world, especially against the likes of China (which is pouring billions into infrastructure), if basic infrastructure needs go unmet. Investing to upgrade and expand our highways, bridges and other infrastructure not only will keep America globally competitive, but is also one of the best ways to create jobs and boost economic demand. As studies have shown, for every \$1 billion in infrastructure spending 18,000 new jobs are created (see: 2009 University of Massachusetts –Amherst study, "*How Infrastructure Investments Support the U.S. Economy*," Political Economy Research Institute and the Alliance for American Manufacturing).

When the United States makes needed infrastructure investments it is equally important to use those taxpayer dollars wisely to create as many jobs in America as possible, including manufacturing jobs. The *Invest in American Jobs Act of 2011* does just that. It strengthens and harmonizes existing Buy America transportation provisions and adds new and sorely-needed transparency and accountability to the waiver process. Additionally, it expands the reach of Buy America to other programs such as clean water infrastructure and certain railroad grant and loan programs. This will go far in multiplying the number of manufacturing jobs here at home because the bill would ensure taxpayer dollars funding these projects are used to purchase iron, steel and manufactured goods made in America. That grows and sustains jobs in America, rather than spending hard-earned taxpayer dollars to put people to work in foreign countries.

According to the 2009 University of Massachusetts study, the number of manufacturing jobs increases by 33 percent when the amount of domestically-sourced goods is maximized with a Buy America provision. The public wholeheartedly agrees, as a 2011 poll shows voters view manufacturing as a crucial part of the nation's economic strength and want Washington to focus on creating manufacturing jobs (see: *Findings From a National Survey and Focus Groups of Likely 2012 Voters*, The Mellman Group and Ayres McHenry Associates, Inc.).

The economic crisis has been particularly hard on manufacturing workers and their families. In September 2011 alone, the economy lost 13,000 manufacturing jobs and over the last decade has lost six million manufacturing jobs and 55,000 facilities - stunning numbers that in good conscience should no longer be ignored by decision-makers. The *Invest in American Jobs Act of 2011* can put people back to work in manufacturing and help restore American manufacturing as the engine for economic growth.

We most appreciate your efforts and will work with you to achieve results that matter for American workers and the America economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leo W. Gerard
International President

LWG/cdk