May 9, 2019

The Honorable Haley Stevens
227 Cannon House Office
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Stevens:

On behalf of the 180,000 American members of the IEEE, I would like to enthusiastically endorse the American Manufacturing Leadership Act, H.R. 2397. This bipartisan bill will reauthorize the Manufacturing USA Program, a crucial bridge between federally funded research and private sector businesses.

Run by NIST, the Manufacturing USA program connects researchers, academics and the business community to make sure the private sector has access to the ideas and insights being produced by our national labs. As such, it serves as a vital bridge across the "valley of death" separating public research and private companies.

America is the world's top manufacturing country. Our technology remains our competitive advantage, and that advantage depends on research to keep us ahead of our international competitors. But research itself isn't enough. America needs a process for getting ideas out of the lab and into businesses quickly. Manufacturing USA does this by directly helping companies to commercialize new products and develop advanced processes for domestic production. The program also helps train our manufacturing workforce to keep up with technological changes.

The 13 Manufacturing USA Institutes connect proven basic research to applied research and demonstration projects that reduce the cost and risk of commercializing new technologies. These facilities also help businesses solve industrial production challenges, which is especially valuable to small and mid-sized companies.   The Institutes help our country overcome a persistent market failure by allowing companies to take advantage of research that is too speculative for the private sector to do itself.

IEEE-USA thanks you for leading on this issue and we urge Congress to reauthorize this essential program.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Coughlin

Thomas Coughlin
2019 IEEE-USA President