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Statement by the Honorable Bobby L. Rush, Chairman

Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on
Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection

Hearing: H.R. 4692, the “National Manufacturing Strategy Act”

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

WASHINGTON — “The subcommittee will come to order. I want to thank the members of the subcommittee who have joined us, today, for participating in this legislative hearing.

“This afternoon, we will examine a very important bill introduced, in February, by my dear friend from Illinois, Congressman Dan Lipinski. I commend him for his leadership on this issue.

“H.R. 4692, the National Manufacturing Strategy Act of 2010, has bipartisan support from Members of Congress, including many who serve on this subcommittee.

“Addressing manufacturing issues is not new to this subcommittee. Last year, we highlighted the need to make the exportation of manufactured goods a national priority for the simple fact that America’s manufacturing sector is an essential foundation of our nation’s economy. Consider the fact that in 2009, the manufacturing sector employed more than 11.5 million people.

“Ladies and gentlemen, that number, though significant is not as good as it could be when you consider that, 10 years ago America’s manufacturing sector employed *17.3 million people*—meaning that our nation actually lost *5.8 million jobs* between 1999 and 2009.

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“The bill we’re considering, today, seeks to make a significant difference in helping to restore and reposition our nation’s manufacturing capacity so that American workers can better compete in today’s global economy.

“Today, we are still fighting our way through a global financial crisis, and we are facing aggressive competition from other industrialized nations as well as emerging countries. Some of our manufacturing competitors have designed and implemented five- or 10-year strategic plans to allow their economies to not only compete globally but, also, to export their goods to our market here at home. The sad fact of the matter is that these international markets are not reciprocating by welcoming U.S. goods to their marketplace.

“In recent years the U.S. has actually *lost* market share to growing export countries like China, Southeast Asia and India.

“If we do not act now, this steady decline will persist. We simply cannot allow that to happen and, thankfully, President Obama agrees.

“I commend the President for the significant steps he has already taken to strengthen our manufacturing sector.

“The President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology continues its assessment of the state of our nation’s manufacturing sector, its policies and initiatives. Their efforts are moving steadily toward a set of recommendations designed to strengthen our nation’s manufacturing sector.

“With H.R. 4692, the bill we are considering today, we take a major step forward toward this shared goal. This bill requires the President to undertake a deep and broad analysis of the nation’s manufacturing sector, including the international economic environment, related technological developments, workforce elements, the impact of governmental policies and other relevant issues affecting domestic manufacturers.

“Based on this analysis, the President, in collaboration with key cabinet officials within his Administration as well as governors, state and local elected officials and other key stakeholders in the public and private sectors, will develop a *four- year national strategy* that identifies goals and makes recommendations to improve our nation’s economic growth.

“Key provisions of this legislation include a provision requiring that the proposed national strategy be delivered to Congress and that it also be published on a website to allow the American

people to be able to monitor, for themselves, our efforts to change course as we work to return the American workforce to the front of the line in terms of manufacturing skills and innovation.

“It is my sincere hope that this legislation, combined with concerted efforts by the public and private sectors, will mark a sea change in our culture that will help our manufacturing sector become bigger, bolder and better than it was in the past.

“The good news is, ladies and gentlemen, that I am convinced that those of us who are assembled here, today, share the same passion on this subject that I do.

“And with that, I look forward to hearing from my colleagues on this subcommittee as well as our invited guests.

“Thank you very much and I yield the balance of my time.”

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