



*Summary of Testimony of Gardner Carrick, Chief Program Officer of The Manufacturing Institute*

The Manufacturing Institute brings decades of policy and direct field experience in apprenticeship through our management of the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME). FAME is a multiemployer apprenticeship model which produces global-best technicians by developing the skills and competencies identified as critical by employers. The program today has a network of nearly 500 companies operating apprenticeship programs in 43 locations across 16 states and employing more than 1,100 students and 2700 graduates. The outcomes include an 83% 21-month on-time completion rate; a 95% full-time employment rate with students' sponsoring companies; and a 96% one-year and 88% three-year retention rate. Across our network, only 15% of FAME students are Registered Apprentices, generally because the employers have determined that the cost of registering outweighs the benefits.

We strongly believe the apprenticeship model is the most successful approach to training technical talent and are committed to expanding its use in manufacturing. For Registered Apprenticeship to have a larger role in that process, it needs to bring added value to companies, providing a mix of sensible standards, a lighter regulatory burden and reasonable incentives.

Congress and this Committee have an opportunity to unlock the full potential of Registered Apprenticeship in manufacturing by:

- Supporting employer-responsive intermediary organizations that help manufacturers navigate the system and build sustainable programs.
- Investing in the related-technical instruction infrastructure, including equipment, training space and instructors needed to support program development.
- Expanding pathways into apprenticeship, including pre-apprenticeship and CTE.
- Encouraging employers to participate in Registered Apprenticeship by providing financial incentives, which could include wage reimbursement, awards per completion and hire, start-up cost support and more.
- Streamlining and modernizing regulations governing Registered Apprenticeship to make them more accessible and reduce the cost of compliance for employers. These include:
  - Shifting from an occupational to a skills-based framework while creating flexibility in the work process requirements.
  - Improving the amendments and modifications process.
  - Modernizing the apprentice-to-experienced-employee ratio requirements.
  - Aligning apprenticeship labor laws with existing requirements for other hires.
  - Clarifying and enforcing reciprocity across Registering Agencies.
- Improving data systems so program participants can make informed decisions.

FAME has taught us that for apprenticeships in manufacturing to be high-quality, rigorous, responsive and scalable requires first and foremost that they be employer-led. In most cases, employers cannot create and deliver apprenticeship models on their own. They need willing and committed partners in the education system to deliver the curriculum desired by the companies and intermediary organizations to organize the companies in their community. We know the model works. If we can support employers in establishing apprenticeships, provide targeted incentives to grow and formalize their program and reduce the cost of compliance for registering their apprenticeship program, we believe that employers in the manufacturing sector will see Registered Apprenticeship as an indispensable tool in their workforce development pipeline.