Manufacturing Leader Sees Bright Future for America

National Association of Manufacturing president & CEO delivers optimistic 2015 State of Manufacturing Address

SPOKANE VALLEY — America’s manufacturing sector is as resilient and robust as ever — and it’s the reason why the nation is rising once again, Jay Timmons, president and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers, said Tuesday during his 2015 State of Manufacturing Address at Spokane Valley Tech.

“When we were tripped up by the Great Recession and many wondered whether manufacturing in America was past its prime, we not only proved the doubters wrong, but have roared back even stronger,” Timmons said.

Timmons delivered his remarks to students, faculty and local manufacturing leaders at Spokane Valley Tech, an innovative high school that equips students with technical skills and experience in growing industries.

The address was part of a 10-city, nationwide tour in which Timmons is highlighting the importance of manufacturing to the nation’s economy, and discussing policy challenges facing the industry. The Association of Washington Business and Greater Spokane Incorporated partnered with NAM to coordinate the visit.

Earlier in the day, Timmons joined AWB President Kris Johnson and GSI President Steve Stevens in a tour of Spokane Community College, and met with high school students from Spokane Valley Tech. Immediately following Timmons’ address, the group toured Wagstaff, Inc., a 64-year-old Spokane manufacturer of machinery that enables aluminum producers to transform molten aluminum into solid shapes.

Despite his optimism, Timmons highlighted several challenges facing American manufacturers:

- **Regulation**: It’s necessary, but should be fair and transparent — and not controlled by special interest groups.
- **Taxes**: America has the highest corporate tax rate on Earth. Our outdated tax code is turning too many businesses away and driving investors out of the country.
- **Trade**: Free and fair trade — including Trade Promotion Authority —will give American manufacturers greater access to foreign markets. Long-term reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank is also necessary.
- **The West Coast port slowdown**: It “slams” manufacturers, he said.
- **Energy**: We need an “all-of-the-above” approach to energy that taps everything from oil, natural gas
and coal to wind, solar and other resources in order to achieve energy independence.

- **Immigration reform:** Comprehensive immigration reform must become a reality, not a wedge, if America is going to create opportunity for today’s workforce and tomorrow’s innovators.

"There are about 500 manufacturing businesses located in Spokane County that employ 15,600 individuals. It's an important asset and remains a flourishing industry, contributing hundreds of millions of dollars to our economy. We are proud to have had Jay join us in Spokane Valley for the manufacturing address and are excited to support our local area manufacturers into the future," Stevens said.

"As the state's manufacturing association, we share Jay's optimism and his concerns," said Johnson. "Washington state's manufacturers are helping to lead the state out of recession. Aerospace employers and the emerging carbon fiber industry are bright spots, bringing new, family-wage jobs to the state. At the same time, we know that proposals such as Gov. Jay Inslee’s cap-and-trade carbon tax would increase the regulatory burden on manufacturers and drive up the cost of energy, forcing them to look elsewhere to make investments."

**About the Association of Washington Business**

*Formed in 1904, the Association of Washington Business is Washington’s oldest and largest statewide business association, and includes more than 8,300 members representing 700,000 employees. AWB serves as both the state’s chamber of commerce and the manufacturing and technology association. While its membership includes major employers like Boeing, Microsoft and Weyerhaeuser, 90 percent of AWB members employ fewer than 100 people. More than half of AWB’s members employ fewer than 10. For more about AWB, visit [www.awb.org](http://www.awb.org).*

Back To News