

Manufacturers Alliance of New York State marks its 10th year

Speaking with one voice to remind our elected officials of the important role manufacturing plays in the state's economy.

AS THE MANUFACTURERS ALLIANCE of New York State marks its 10th year, we continue our efforts to promote a pro-growth policy agenda in the Empire State. The Alliance was formed in 2005 by two New York State regional associations, the Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY), and the Council of Industry of Southeastern New York (CI). These century-old associations realized that government policies were having an ever-greater effect on their member companies and that it was increasingly important for those members to have a voice in policy making. Furthermore, they realized that by joining together their collective message about manufacturing needs would be given greater voice and serve to strengthen their cause.

Since its inception, the Alliance has grown to include seven statewide regional manufacturing associations, representing over 1000 industrial companies in 45 counties. We are representatives of the statewide manufacturing community with a single mission: to achieve significant and meaningful reforms in Albany that will make New York State an easier and better place to manufacture quality products and run businesses. We have had some success in areas such as tax and energy policy but there is much yet to be done.

Here are some of the pro-growth policies we will be advancing as we engage the 2015 legislative session:

Karyn Burns is Council of Industry Director of Government Affairs and Executive Director of the Manufacturers Alliance of New York.

1. Keep state budget growth under two percent and resist the temptation to spend more.
2. Pass an on-time budget.
3. Reduce energy costs by repealing the 18-a assessment on energy, which increases



Karyn Burns, of the Manufacturers Alliance and Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney (D-18)

energy costs for all businesses; expand the state's natural gas distribution network.

4. Direct spending of the \$5 billion financial settlement windfall to badly needed improvements to roads, bridges and other public infrastructure, as well as accelerating the reduction of the 18a Assessment.

5. Simplify and ease the regulatory burden that businesses face by conforming state regulations to federal regulations wherever possible and eliminating unnecessary over-regulation.

6. Enact statutory and regulatory workers compensation reforms that will lower employer costs while preserving quality care for workers injured on the job.

7. Reject calls for additional wage and benefits mandates, such as increases to the state minimum wage and mandatory paid family leave.

8. Advance education and workforce development initiatives, which include expanding of and better funding for the NYS P-TECH program. Promote regional, sector-based workforce development strategies.

According to the Department of Commerce, in 2012 New York had 16,475 manufacturing firms, employing 426,621 people. Speaking together through the Alliance, New York manufacturers are reminding our elected officials of the important role manufacturing plays in the state's economy and also helping them to understand how state policies can both help and hurt our sector.



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(left to right) Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney (D-18), Congressman Chris Gibson (R-19) and Harold King

“Smart People Working Together”

Council Member CEOs Discuss Issues with Hudson Valley Congressmen

The issues discussed were familiar ones when Congressmen Sean Patrick Maloney (D-18) and Chris Gibson (R-19) joined Council Member CEOs for a Congressional Roundtable at the Council of Industry office on the Desmond Campus of Mount St. Mary College. Taxes, regulations, workforce development, health care, energy, workers compensation, trade, and immigration were all subjects of discussion. Something else that is now becoming familiar is the convivial atmosphere that exists between the two Hudson Valley Congressmen and the manufacturing executives from their districts.

Both congressmen have developed reputations as problem solvers. While Congressman Gibson, who was presented with a Manufacturing Champion Award by the Council of Industry in 2014, clearly is more closely aligned with members on the issues, Congressman Maloney has consistently demonstrated a willingness to listen and to adjust his positions on many issues in order to support manufacturing in the region. One area of common ground is workforce development and education. Both congressmen spoke eloquently about the importance of manufacturing jobs to the economy and as a pathway to the middle class, and both are supportive of improving the workforce development system to ensure that worker skills match career opportunities.

Congressman Gibson summed up the nearly two-hour discussion best when he said, “I believe that whenever you can get smart people working together, like the people sitting around this table, we can solve problems.”