

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Senator Mark Kirk

Made In America Manufacturing Communities Act

Purpose: Strong foundations for durable manufacturing growth are based on local strategies, which take advantage of communities' existing strengths. The *Made In America Manufacturing Communities Act* is bipartisan legislation that authorizes a public-private program to enhance the way we leverage federal economic development funds to encourage American communities to focus not only on attracting individual investments one at a time, but transforming themselves into globally competitive manufacturing hubs. This proposal, based on a current initiative, will be coordinated by the U.S. Department of Commerce and bring together the resources of multiple federal departments and agencies involved in economic development to better leverage federal programs and resources behind locally-driven manufacturing strategies.

This legislation does not propose a new funding program but rather awards a designated community preferential consideration for up to \$1.3 billion in existing federal economic development assistance across eleven federal agencies, reducing current burdens faced by communities and small manufacturers in navigating and accessing federal support. Non-designated communities nationwide can also learn from the best practices employed by these designated communities to strengthen American manufacturing.

In order to earn the designation, communities have to demonstrate the significance of manufacturing already present in their region and develop strategies to use the designation in making investments in six areas:

- 1) workforce training and retraining;
- 2) advanced research;
- 3) infrastructure and site development;
- 4) supply chain support;
- 5) trade and international investment; and
- 6) operational improvement and capital access.

Eligibility: This legislation encourages a regionally-driven approach to strengthening U.S. manufacturing. Regional consortiums are eligible to receive a designation through this program. Consortiums must organize key stakeholders in a targeted industry cluster or broader manufacturing partnership into a working group that focuses on the needs of manufacturers. Key stakeholders may include state economic development and workforce officials, county and local governments, manufacturers, labor organizations, higher education and other training providers, local and regional chambers of commerce, non-profit organizations and local and regional Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers.

Additional Details:

How will proposals be evaluated?

Applications are evaluated on several key criteria:

- Proposals must demonstrate regional cooperation through a consortium of public and private partners and the strength of their partnerships.
- Applicants must define a geographic scope for their proposed community. The community must be large enough to contain critical elements of key technologies and supply chains, but small enough to enable close collaboration.
- Another important objective was to show how a designation will help a community build on its existing strengths and comparative advantages – not start from scratch – and have a substantial impact on a community's overall prosperity.

How long will this designation be good for?

Manufacturing Communities will remain designated for two years. Current designees will have the opportunity to reapply to keep their designation.

Which federal agencies participate in this program?

Designated communities will receive coordinated support for their strategies from the following eleven federal agencies with more than \$1 billion available in federal economic development assistance:

- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Delta Regional Authority
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Science Foundation
- Small Business Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Transportation

What are the benefits to communities that went through the designation process, but were not selected?

Many of the applicants to the current program reported that, regardless of whether they were designated, the coordination and comprehensive planning effort that the initiative spurred in their region will help to strengthen local public-private partnerships that can lead to job creation and economic growth.

Communities were asked to define their own regions, build strong and durable industrial ecosystems, and align industry needs for worker training, research, supply chains, capital access, infrastructure and site development and trade. However, because the designation process helped drive wide collaboration and helped focus regions on their assets, it is expected that communities that did not receive a designation will move forward with their strategies using state, local, and private resources. Further, communities that did not receive designation are still eligible for federal economic development funds, and may apply for designation in future competitive rounds.

Endorsements

American Small Manufacturers Coalition
BlueGreen Alliance
Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturers' Enterprise (FAME)
High Tech Rochester
Manufacturing Alliance of Communities
Manufacturers Association of Central New York
Mohawk Valley EDGE (Economic Development Growth Enterprises Corporation)
National Association of Counties
National Association of Development Organizations
National Skills Coalition
National Tooling and Machining Association
Precision Machined Products Association
Precision Metalforming Association
St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
The Association For Manufacturing Technology
The Information Technology & Innovation Foundation
U.S. Conference of Mayors