

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 14, 2015

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter:

Georgia's position as a national leader in fibers and textiles manufacturing, defense research, transportation, logistics and workforce training makes our state a natural partner for the Department of Defense's proposed Revolutionary Fibers and Textiles Manufacturing Institute (RFT-MII). With this in mind, we write to encourage you to give full consideration to the Georgia Institute of Technology as a participant in the RFT-MII. Georgia Tech, as part of a textile industry backed team, has been selected to host an Innovative Manufacturing Center (IMC). The Georgia Center is one of four distributed nationally to serve the entire fiber and textile industry and includes expertise from other Georgia institutions like Georgia Southern University, Dalton State College and Kennesaw State University.

Home to more than 10 military installations, we, in Georgia, understand the importance of developing the next generation of military technologies in order to protect our service members and support DOD's mission. RFT-MII provides an ideal opportunity to further strengthen ties between DOD and a state that has long been a critical player in our national defense. Few realize that Georgia is home to 53,119 jobs in the textiles/apparel industry. Despite being devastated by globalization, the textile/apparel sector remains Georgia's second largest industry. The revolution of this industry has already started in Georgia. We are excited to bring DOD in as a partner so that the service members can better benefit from the amazing technological advances taking place at both large and small companies in Georgia and in the labs and classrooms of our universities.

Georgia has a ready and growing workforce that can support the new jobs that will be created by the RFT-MII. Fifty thousand new residents arrive in Georgia each year -- many with advanced degrees and technical qualifications which help ensure manufacturing companies have a growing pool of skilled labor. Additionally, advanced manufacturing workforce training at state-of-the-art manufacturing labs, including the operation and repair of the latest robotic, PLC and CIM equipment, helps manufacturing companies maintain a competitive workforce advantage. Like defense, manufacturing is central to Georgia's identity.

Georgia is proud of the close connections between industry and our research universities. These relationships help drive innovation in the marketplace and are codified in Georgia's Center of Innovation for Manufacturing, which is co-located with the Georgia Tech Manufacturing Institute. Georgia Tech is a national leader in advanced manufacturing, home to Georgia's Manufacturing Extension Partnership program, and a global leader in the

commercialization of research. This partnership would benefit DOD at a time when changing threats and a constrained fiscal future make efficiency and technological advancement paramount to ensuring that America's military capabilities remain unmatched.

We hope you agree with our view of the potential for revolutionary fiber and textile manufacturing in Georgia to both get the latest technologies in the hands of U.S. service members and to catalyze an industry that could be in a better position to provide DOD with affordable and reliable American-made products. Your investment in this effort will not only spur innovation, but it will cultivate a skilled workforce that will benefit our nation for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



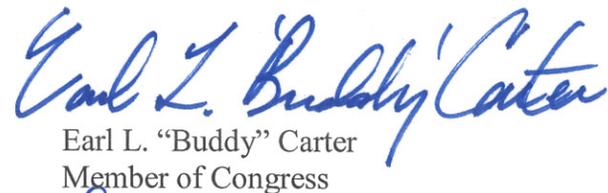
Johnny Isakson
U.S. Senator



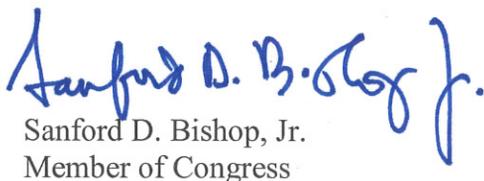
David Perdue
U.S. Senator



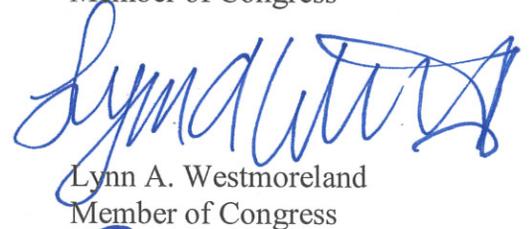
John Lewis
Member of Congress



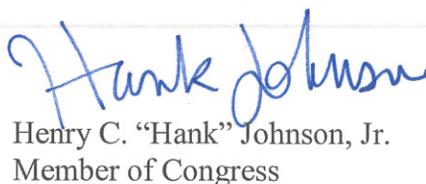
Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



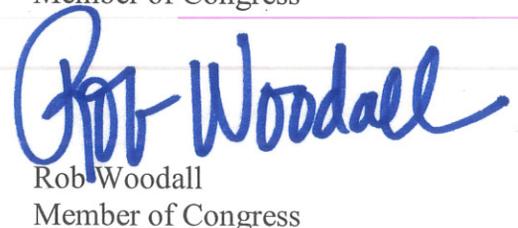
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Lynn A. Westmoreland
Member of Congress



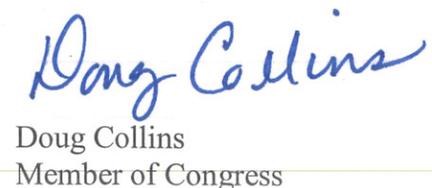
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Rob Woodall
Member of Congress



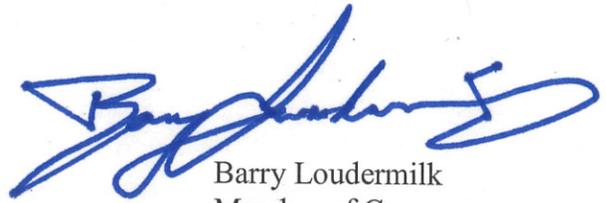
Austin Scott
Member of Congress



Doug Collins
Member of Congress



Jody B. Hice
Member of Congress



Barry Loudermilk
Member of Congress



Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Tom Graves
Member of Congress