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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OMA Selected to Lead New Era for Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has selected the Ohio Manufacturers' Association Educational and Industrial Development Institute to operate Ohio's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Center, putting the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) in charge of rebuilding one of the state's most important manufacturing support networks after months of disruption and uncertainty.

The selection gives OMA responsibility for building and overseeing a statewide network that will provide hands-on technical assistance to small and medium-sized manufacturers in technology adoption, process improvement, workforce development, supply chain and growth strategy.

The award includes approximately \$6.1 million annually in federal funding, matched by an equal amount in non-federal cost share, representing roughly \$12.2 million in annual program activity. The initial period of performance is five years, with the potential for renewal.

"This is a major moment for Ohio's small and medium-sized manufacturers," said Ryan Augsburger, president of the Ohio Manufacturers' Association. "We now have the opportunity to rebuild this program around the needs of manufacturers, with stronger accountability, better coordination and a clear expectation that every dollar should produce value on the plant floor."

The new award follows a difficult period for Ohio's MEP system. Federal and state funding for the previous statewide structure was suspended in late 2025, creating significant disruption across the network and uncertainty for manufacturers that relied on its services.

NIST later opened a new competition to select an organization to operate the Ohio center.

"This award gives us the opportunity to build a industry-led delivery system for Ohio manufacturing," Augsburger said. "Manufacturers will help set the priorities, regional partners will deliver services close to the companies that need them, and OMA will connect the system statewide with clear accountability. Ohio cannot afford to be left behind as technology and competition move faster, and this gives manufacturers a stronger system to help them keep pace."

Under the new structure, OMA will establish statewide oversight, put financial and compliance systems in place and conduct a competitive process to select regional delivery organizations serving manufacturers throughout Ohio.

Small and medium-sized manufacturers account for 98% of Ohio's manufacturing base and are often the companies least able to purchase specialized technical expertise on the open market.

The new center will focus on helping those companies improve productivity, adopt new technologies, strengthen their workforce and supply chains, and pursue growth opportunities.

"Ohio manufacturers have been through months of disruption and uncertainty around this program," Augsburger said. "That chapter is over. We are going to build a system manufacturers can trust, one that is statewide, disciplined, responsive and focused on helping companies invest, modernize and grow."

OMA's application received support from Gov. Mike DeWine, Lt. Gov. Jim Tressel, U.S. Sens. Bernie Moreno and Jon Husted and manufacturers across Ohio.

"Ohio's state and federal leaders flat-out saved these critical services for the little guy," Augsburger said.

Implementation will begin immediately, with OMA finalizing the cooperative agreement with NIST, establishing the center's required oversight structure and beginning the competitive process for regional delivery partners.

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The Ohio Manufacturers' Association is Ohio's largest statewide business association composed solely of manufacturers. Established in 1910, the OMA's mission is to protect and grow Ohio manufacturing. It represents manufacturers of all sizes in every subsector of the industry. Manufacturing is Ohio's largest economic sector, employing approximately 690,000 Ohioans and contributing more than \$138 billion annually to the economy. Visit ohiomfg.com, or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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