



Oct. 1, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kornacki, Bitzer Headline Forum with Focus on Ohio Investment, 2026 Election Map

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio manufacturing leaders gathered Thursday for the Ohio Manufacturers' Annual Forum, where Whirlpool Corporation Chairman and CEO Marc Bitzer and NBC News Chief Data Analyst Steve Kornacki offered two distinct looks at the forces shaping manufacturing, business and public policy.

Bitzer focused on American manufacturing, investment and competitiveness, highlighting Whirlpool's recent \$360 million investment in Ohio and the state's importance to the company's long-term U.S. operations.

"Whirlpool Corporation started in America, stayed in America and we're continuing to build our future here. Our recent \$360 million investment in Ohio manufacturing recognizes this state as a vital part of our U.S. operations. It also serves as a testament to our confidence in Ohio's talent pool and the state's commitment to manufacturing," Bitzer said. "Working together with organizations across the state, like the Ohio Manufacturers Association, we can ensure Ohio and the U.S. remain a growing hub for American jobs, ingenuity and manufacturing for generations to come."

Kornacki brought his signature big-board analysis to Columbus, walking manufacturers through the numbers, voter shifts and races shaping the final stretch of the 2026 election. His presentation moved from national attitudes on the economy, inflation and immigration to the fight for control of Congress before turning to Ohio's U.S. Senate race and several congressional contests across the state.

"Steve has a way of cutting through an enormous amount of political data and showing you very quickly where the pressure points are," said Ryan Augsburger, president of the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA). "Our members got a close look at the races, counties and voter shifts that could matter most over the next month."

Kornacki's appearance followed Wednesday's OMA Government Affairs Committee meeting, which featured election analysis from Kyle Kondik of Sabato's Crystal Ball and gave members an additional look at the political environment heading into November.

The Forum also recognized manufacturing leaders for their service to the industry. William "Bill" Sopko received OMA's Dan French Legacy Award in recognition of more than two decades of leadership and service to Ohio manufacturing, while Luke Harms, director of government relations at Whirlpool Corporation and chair of OMA's Government Affairs Committee, received the William Babington, Jr. Award for outstanding volunteer leadership.

OMA also debuted a [new video](#) looking ahead to America's next 250 years through the voices of Ohio manufacturers, highlighting the people, technology and investment shaping the industry's future.

The Ohio Manufacturers' Annual Forum brings together manufacturing executives, policy leaders and partners from across the state for business and policy insights, networking and recognition of leadership across Ohio manufacturing.

###

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](#).

Dave O'Neil

Director, Communications and Marketing

(614) 302-7990

doneil@ohiomfg.com

33 N. High St., 6th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3005

Phone: 614-224-5111 • Toll free: 800-662-4463
Fax: 614-224-1012

oma@ohiomfg.com
WWW.OHIOMFG.COM