

National Manufacturing Guard Act of 2021

Senators Chris Coons, Marco Rubio, Maggie Hassan, and John Cornyn

BACKGROUND

- **The COVID-19 pandemic revealed vulnerabilities in the supply chains for critical resources.** The U.S. suffered from nationwide shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilators, pipette tips and other critical goods. If we are unable to increase our domestic manufacturing capacity in a time of crisis, we are forced to rely on nations such as China for life-sustaining resources.
- **A coordinated federal effort is necessary to prepare for future crises.** For the first several months of the crisis, states, counties, businesses, and individuals were all competing for scarce resources. The U.S. government lacked a clear strategy for increasing and distributing supplies of these resources, and established task forces to fill capability gaps. Whether the next crisis is a pandemic, natural disaster, cyberattack, or something else, the U.S. Government must anticipate the greatest threats to our supply chains, develop tools to improve resilience, and coordinate the all-of-America response during a crisis.
- **Public-private partnership is key to developing more resilient supply chains.** Manufacturers, producers, suppliers, and distributors in every sector were willing to contribute however possible in the fight to combat COVID-19, and many formed ad hoc coalitions to coordinate their efforts. The U.S. Government has a key role to play in helping these partners provide the maximum impact.

NATIONAL MANUFACTURING GUARD ACT

- **The bill establishes an Office of Supply Chain Preparedness in the Department of Commerce.** This office is supervised by a Director of Supply Chain Preparedness, who will be advised by a Council with representatives from other relevant U.S. government departments, Manufacturing USA institutes, Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnerships Centers, labor organizations, and industry experts in manufacturing and supply chains.
- **The Office will oversee a National Manufacturing Guard.** The National Manufacturing Guard will be a reserve workforce of manufacturing and supply chain experts, who are trained to respond to a crisis of scarcity. During such a crisis, the Director will activate the National Manufacturing Guard to assist manufacturers as they scale-up production of resources, identify and resolve bottlenecks in supply chains, and coordinate efforts between the U.S. government and private entities.
- **A Supply Chain Data Exchange provides intelligence to the Office.** Working with industry partners to collect, aggregate, and analyze manufacturing and supply chain data in a secure clearinghouse, the Office will develop a Data Exchange that enables insight into the national supply, capacity, and potential shortages of critical resources.
- **A Manufacturing Corps builds the workforce in manufacturing and supply chains.** A skilled workforce is critical to building a more resilient supply chain. The Manufacturing Corps is an apprenticeship program for early career workers, especially underrepresented minorities, women, and veterans, to build the skills necessary for a more resilient manufacturing economy.
- **A necessary part of a comprehensive U.S. manufacturing strategy** to bolster our position as the world leader in advanced manufacturing and build more resilient supply chains for critical resources.
- **Authorizes \$1 billion over 5 years to the Department of Commerce.**

This legislation is endorsed by the American Small Manufacturers Coalition, the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, the National Defense Industrial Association, and Intelligent Manufacturing Systems International.