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February 20, 2004

Dr. Gregory Mankiw  
Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers  
Executive Office of the President  
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Dr. Mankiw:

I noticed in the recently released *Economic Report of the President* that there was some consternation in the defining of manufacturing. It could be inferred from your report that the administration is willing to recognize drink mixing, hamburger garnishing, French/freedom fry cooking, and milk shake mixing to be vital components of our manufacturing sector.

I am sure the 163,000 factory workers who have lost their jobs in Michigan will find it heartening to know that a world of opportunity awaits them in high growth manufacturing careers like spatula operator, napkin restocking, and lunch tray removal. I do have some questions of this new policy and I hope you will help me provide answers for my constituents:

Will federal student loans and Trade Adjustment Assistance grants be applied to tuition costs at Burger College?

Will the administration commit to allowing the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) to fund cutting edge burger research such as new nugget ingredients or keeping the hot and cold sides of burgers separate until consumption?

Will special sauce now be counted as a durable good?

Do you want fries with that?

Finally, at a speech he gave in Michigan this past September, Secretary Evans announced the creation of a new Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing. While I understand that it takes a while to find the right candidate to fill these positions, I am concerned that five months after the announcement no Assistant Secretary has yet been named. I do, however, know of a public official who would be perfect for the job. He has over thirty years of administrative and media experience, has a remarkable record of working with diverse constituencies, and is extraordinarily well qualified to understand this emerging manufacturing sector: the Hon. Mayor McCheese.

With every good wish,

Sincerely,

  
John D. Dingell  
Member of Congress