

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Mary Bono Mack  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade  
Subcommittee Markup on H.R. 5859 and H.R. 5865  
June 6, 2012**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Following 40 straight months of unemployment above 8 percent – the longest such stretch since the Great Depression – we need a new vision and strategy for creating jobs in America. Today, nearly 23 million people around the U.S. are unemployed, underemployed or have quit looking for work.

When I became Chairman of this Subcommittee last year, one of my goals was to create new job opportunities by making “Made in America” matter again. Now, we have a chance for that to happen by developing a blueprint for manufacturing, which focuses on competitiveness, long-term sustainability and making certain the United States is a logical “first choice” when it comes to locating or expanding manufacturing.

For decades, manufacturing served as the backbone of our economy, only to go into a steep tailspin, losing nearly 6 million American jobs since 2001.

Statistics show the manufacturing sector was the hardest hit in terms of job losses during the recession.

While manufacturing accounts for just a tenth of our nation’s jobs, manufacturing suffered a third of our nation’s job losses.

We have a chance now to reverse this trend, and I again applaud the hard work of two of our Illinois colleagues, Mr. Kinzinger and Mr. Lipinski, in developing a bipartisan plan for improving manufacturing in the United States. Tomorrow, we will begin consideration of their legislation.

The American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act of 2012, H.R. 5865, calls for two Presidential reports, outlining a strategy for promoting growth, sustainability and competitiveness in the manufacturing sector. The reports are due in 2014 and 2018.

The Act establishes the American Manufacturing Competitiveness Board consisting of 15 Members, five from the public sector, including two Governors, and ten from the private sector. The five public appointments are

made by the President, while the ten private-sector members are appointed by the House and Senate.

The Board would be co-chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and one of the private-sector members.

The duties of the Board are to: (1) advise the President and ultimately Congress on manufacturing issues; (2) conduct a rigorous analysis of the manufacturing sector; and (3) develop a national competitiveness strategy, which would be made available for public comment and submitted to the President.

The Board will then develop and publish for public comment a draft manufacturing strategy based on its analysis and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

This strategy will include short-term and long-term goals for improving the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing as well as recommendations for action.

The second bill we will be considering, H.R. 5859, repeals an obsolete provision in the United States Code, requiring motor vehicle insurance cost reporting. I also want to commend Mr. Harper of Mississippi and Mr. Owens of New York for their bipartisan work on this legislation.

Here's the problem: In 1993, NHTSA issued a final rule, requiring new car dealers to make available to buyers a booklet containing the latest information on insurance costs. The information is updated by NHTSA annually based on data from the Highway Loss Data Institute.

The information required by this regulation is rarely sought by consumers and its value is highly questionable. Insurance premiums are based primarily on factors that are unrelated to the susceptibility of damage to a vehicle, including the driver's age, driving record, location, and miles driven.

Additionally, a recent survey of 815 members of the National Automobile Dealers Association reported 96 percent of its dealers had never been asked by a customer to see the insurance cost booklet that is at issue.

Clearly, this is yet another example of where the cost of a federal regulation outweighs its potential benefit. As a nation, we simply can't keep doing business this way.

Both of the bills under consideration are positive economic steps and enjoy bipartisan support. As Chairman of this Subcommittee, I urge their passage.