

Sample letter to members of Congress. Personal notes to Congress are more effective than form letters, so you may wish to add a paragraph in your own words introducing yourself and your concerns.

Dear Representative/Senator:

Our nation's manufacturing sector is in crisis. The United States has lost more than 2 million manufacturing jobs since April 1998, accounting for 90 percent of the jobs lost in the past four years. In the past six months, every state has lost manufacturing jobs, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. As a share of total private nonfarm jobs, manufacturing declined since its peak of 40 percent just after World War II to 28 percent in 1979 and now stands at about 15 percent.

Our nation cannot afford to allow this decline to continue. Manufacturing is the mainstay of many states' economies and is critical to maintaining a vibrant national economy. During and after World War II, manufacturing built this nation's middle class. Today, manufacturing provides jobs in many sectors, including traditional industrial jobs as well as positions in communications and information technology, construction, transportation and services.

In addition, restoring America's manufacturing base and production capacity is essential for national security in these uncertain times. We should not compromise our ability to build ships, vehicles, airplanes, machine tools and other materials that might be vital for our nation's defense.

To rebuild our manufacturing base, I urge you to take the following urgent steps:

1. **Publicly support the freedom of workers to form unions** without employer interference, encourage workers to exercise their right to join a union and urge employers to remain neutral during organizing campaigns.
2. **Oppose bills that would undermine worker protections**, such as "comp time" proposals that would undermine the 40-hour workweek—or the Norwood proposal to prohibit workers from organizing through voluntary card-check recognition.
3. **Support a Medicare prescription drug benefit** that provides coverage for all seniors, including those who previously were covered through employer-sponsored plans. Oppose any Medicare prescription drug proposals that discriminate against and exclude retirees who have coverage under existing employer plans.
4. **Oppose any reform of the Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) tax, such as California Republican Rep. Bill Thomas's proposal, that would encourage the shift of more manufacturing jobs overseas.**



5. **Support legislation to stop companies from incorporating overseas** in order to avoid taxes, and deny government contracts to companies that engage in such abuses.
6. **Oppose trade agreements—including the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) currently in negotiation—that do not include meaningful protections for workers’ rights** so America’s industrial workers can compete fairly.
7. **Increase our national security by supporting measures to strengthen the domestic defense manufacturing base**, including procurement reform, enhanced “Buy American” requirements and limits to “offsets” that drain critical technology and good jobs.
8. **Speak out about the crisis in manufacturing** and the need for proposals to strengthen our industrial base by initiating town hall meetings, op-ed pieces, one-minute speeches and other outreach to the public in a timely way.

Sincerely,

