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Secretary Newson: Providing Manufacturing Sector Skilled Workers Vital to Strong Economy, Continued Job Growth

State Labor Secretary visits Pewaukee manufacturer, cites work to ensure skilled workforce

PEWAUKEE – During a visit to Ellison Technologies today, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson said providing Ellison Technologies and other manufacturers the skilled workers they need will spur economic growth and help create family-supporting jobs.

Governor Scott Walker proclaimed October as Manufacturing Month. Throughout the month, DWD is coordinating outreach efforts with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, and the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership to highlight the sector's importance and the rewarding careers it offers.

"Supporting Wisconsin manufacturers like Ellison Technologies is critical to ensuring Wisconsin residents opportunities for good, family-supporting jobs in Wisconsin," Secretary Newson said. He said manufacturing has been leading Wisconsin's recovery and meeting its workforce needs will help sustain economic growth.

Manufacturing contributes more than \$50 billion to the economy and employs nearly 450,000 Wisconsin workers. Last year, the sector added more than 11,000 jobs, providing family-supporting income for thousands of households. DWD is working diligently with manufacturing employers to identify, screen, and prepare workers who can fill skilled and semi-skilled job openings in high-wage, high-growth industries like advanced manufacturing.

Since Governor Walker's proclamation of October as Manufacturing Month, Secretary Newson and other workforce and education leaders have been traveling the state, talking with local manufacturers and technical colleges to learn how the state's workforce system is preparing workers for careers in manufacturing.

"We look forward to developing innovative solutions that provide a sustainable supply of appropriately-skilled workers for opportunities in manufacturing and other growing employment sectors," Secretary Newson said. "Improving our workforce system will help Wisconsin businesses continue to prosper under Governor Walker's 'Open for Business' agenda."

Secretary Newson cited best practices that are helping youth to consider and prepare for manufacturing jobs, including Second Chance Partners for Education in southeastern Wisconsin and Cardinal Manufacturing, operated by the Eleva-Strum School District. Both programs involve a close partnership between businesses and education providers to blend academic learning and vocational training, resulting in students who are ready to enter the workforce after graduating from high school.