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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 4, 2012

CONTACT: DWD Communications, 608-266-2722

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## **Department of Workforce Development Joins other Agencies at Manufacturing Conference to Support Vital Industry Sector**

*Secretary Newson will address manufacturing skills gap on panel with WMC & WTCS*

MILWAUKEE – Department of Workforce Development Secretary (DWD) Reggie Newson will address the state's need for skilled manufacturing workers when he joins a panel discussion at the Manufacturing Matters conference, which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership and scheduled for May 9 at the Frontier Airlines Center in Milwaukee.

"The Manufacturing Matters conference will showcase the strength of Wisconsin's manufacturers and will bring together local, regional, and state leaders to address issues facing manufacturing in Wisconsin," Secretary Newson said. "As a critical industry in Wisconsin employing nearly 450,000 Wisconsinites, manufacturing is driving our state's economic recovery, and our state needs to have pipeline of talent flowing to this very important industry."

Secretary Newson will participate in a panel with Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce Foundation head Jim Morgan and Wisconsin Technical College System President Dan Clancy to discuss how recent state and private-sector initiatives will meet labor needs for state manufacturers in the years to come.

DWD staff will also participate in a "listening post" with a number of other state agencies including the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Department of Natural Resources, and many other state agencies. The listening post will serve as an opportunity for manufacturers and other employers to interact directly with agency staff and get answers to questions regarding agency programs and services. DWD Youth Apprenticeship staff and representatives from Project Lead the Way, the Waukesha County Manufacturing Alliance, Milwaukee 7 and a number of other organizations will be attending the conference to provide information about their programs.

Former Bucyrus CEO Tim Sullivan, who chairs the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment and has been appointed Special Consultant for Business and Workforce Development by Governor Walker, will deliver the morning keynote address to conference attendees focusing on efforts by state government to address the skills gap between manufacturing labor needs and workers in the state.

Additional information about the conference, including how to register, can be found at <http://www.manufacturingmatters.org/>.