



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SNOWE & COLLINS ANNOUNCE SENATE ACTION TO PROVIDE FUNDS TO THE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Washington, DC – Senators Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Susan Collins (R-ME) announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved \$112 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). MEP is a network of over 60 centers with 400 locations across the country providing technical assistance to small manufacturers. Small firms assisted by MEP have access to a network of resources enabling them to compete with larger manufacturers.

“The Manufacturing Extension Partnership has bolstered the economy of Maine, helping small manufacturers throughout the State retain and create jobs,” Senators Snowe and Collins said in a joint statement. “We commend the Appropriations Committee for including significant funding for this program so companies throughout the country might be able to continue to benefit from MEP’s services.”

Over the past year, companies assisted by Maine MEP reported that they: created or retained 332 jobs, experienced increased and retained sales of \$7.79 million, and spent \$2.2 million on new investments.

"I believe that small manufacturers have a direct impact on the national security of this country," said Bruce Pulkkinen, President of Windham Millwork and Chair of the Maine MEP Board of Directors. "At a time when manufacturing job losses are spiraling out of control it is important to continue funding the MEP program which provides an invaluable resource to the small manufacturers."

The MEP funding is included in the Senate’s Fiscal Year 2005 Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Bill.