

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 4, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
U.S. Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

As you consider full proposals for the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation (DMDI) Institute, we write to express our support for the Digital Lab for Manufacturing ("Digital Lab"), a proposal led by UI LABS, an independent, nonprofit organization based in Chicago that includes partnerships with Illinois' industry, research universities, government, and workforce development partners.

In response to DOD's call for a national institute to focus on complex issues in manufacturing, UI LABS developed a Digital Lab consortium that includes the nation's premier engineering schools, the country's leading defense and commercial manufacturers, the world's most powerful supercomputer, and nationally-recognized educational and business development partners. This team is uniquely positioned to develop solutions that leverage digital technology to accelerate the design to production timeline, reducing costs and offsetting risks for the U.S. manufacturing base. This applied research in advanced manufacturing fields will help improve the economy by making the U.S. more competitive on a global scale.

Illinois has a strong manufacturing tradition and will bring that strength to this proposal. In addition to Boeing, Caterpillar, Deere & Company, Illinois Tool Works and scores of small manufacturers, the Digital Lab team includes the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Illinois Institute of Technology, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University as well as a number of community colleges throughout the state. The State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, and the Illinois Science and Technology Coalition are also financial backers of this proposal.

The Digital Lab team is industry-driven and sustainable in the long term with commitments from defense and commercial manufacturers including General Electric, Lockheed Martin, Rolls-Royce, Procter & Gamble, Siemens, Dow, Dassault Systèmes, General Dynamics Northrup Grumman, Microsoft and hundreds of small businesses. The Digital Lab's research and state partners are regionally anchored in the Midwest, spanning Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Missouri, and Nebraska. Additionally, the team includes partners in Texas, Colorado, New York and Oregon to leverage research and technology and deploy solutions on a broad scale. Together, commitments from the team's partners exceed \$250 million.

The Midwest-based Digital Lab is uniquely positioned to bring significant returns on the federal government's research and development investment, expand access to new technology for small manufacturers and create high-wage, high-skilled jobs for American workers.

For these reasons, we ask that you give the Digital Lab proposal full consideration.

Sincerely,



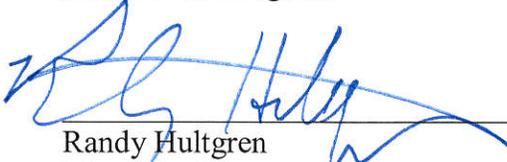
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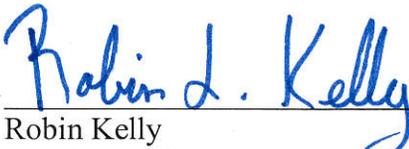
  
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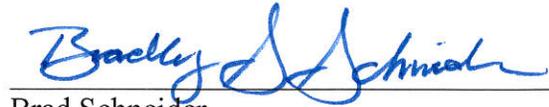
  
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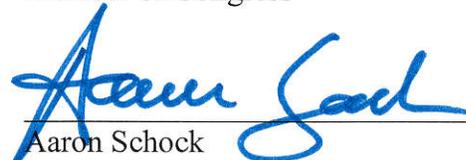
  
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