



## *National Tooling & Machining Association*

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June 22, 2011

Mr. John Ratzenberger  
Industrial Tsunami Campaign  
c/o Center for America  
230 Willow Springs Drive  
Roswell, GA 30075

Dear Mr. Ratzenberger,

On behalf of the National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA), I am pleased to write in support of the Industrial Tsunami Pledge Campaign which you are launching with the Center for America on Labor Day, September 5, 2011.

NTMA is the national association representing the \$40 billion precision custom manufacturing industry, which employs more than 440,000 skilled workers in the United States. NTMA's mission is to help members of the U.S. precision custom manufacturing industry achieve business success in a global economy through advocacy, advice, networking, information, programs and services. NTMA's nearly 1,300 member companies design and manufacture special tools, dies, jigs, fixtures, gages, special machines and precision-machined parts.

We endorse the goal of the Industrial Tsunami Pledge Campaign to have one million Americans in the next year sign an on-line pledge in support of training a new generation of skilled workers in America. The pledge calls upon people to take an action of their choice in their local communities, such as school guidance counselors visiting with local manufacturers and manufacturers volunteering to speak to school groups about necessary skills.

We are pleased to join the Pledge Campaign because of the importance of training skilled workers in our industry. NTMA has been at the forefront of efforts to change perceptions about manufacturing and attract a new generation of Americans to our sector. NTMA founded the National Robotics League (NRL) to help change misperceptions about manufacturing and attract students to high-paying technical careers. The program partners teams of middle school, high school, and post-secondary school students with local NTMA manufacturers who work together to build machines designed to do battle and test ingenuity. The result is the creation of incredible 15 lb. robotic machines and fun and exciting events, all while building high-tech skills and sparking the interest of students about careers in manufacturing.

The NRL helps build a solid foundation of needed skilled thinkers in our next generation. The NRL combines students' problem solving and technical skills while forging lasting ties with the best manufacturing partners in the country. The students learn how to make things, apply strategic thinking into product development and are introduced to careers in manufacturing, while manufacturers build valuable relationships with schools resulting in ongoing internship programs and other partnerships.

NTMA is also pleased that one of the core goals of this campaign is to improve the image and restore the dignity of skilled work in America as well as remove the stigma from skilled labor which is one of the causes of a growing shortage of young people entering the skilled trades.

NTMA is also working to change perceptions of manufacturing. As Grady Cope recently stated in his inaugural speech as NTMA Chairman: "In order for us to grow our industry and attract talent to our shops, we have to change the public's perception of our industry. To exist as an industry you have to exist in other people's minds! This includes our neighbors, schoolteachers and counselors, as well as our local, state, and federal public officials. If we want to be relevant, it is time we market ourselves to our Nation."

We are proud to join other trade associations, businesses, school systems and community leaders who are supporting the Industrial Tsunami Pledge Campaign to promote the training of a new generation of skilled workers in America and urge others to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Tilstone".

Dave Tilstone  
President