

# NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO

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May 19, 2014

Dear Members of the Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee:

**Re: Please Support Made in America Legislative Package**

S-1811 (Sweeney), S-2045 (Sweeney / O'Toole), S-2048 (Sweeney / O'Toole),

S-2061 (Sweeney / O'Toole), S-2062 (Sweeney / O'Toole)

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO supports the package of five bills that collectively referred to as "Made in America" legislation, and we respectfully ask for your support. We would like to commend Senate President Sweeney for his leadership role in sponsoring this package, as well as Senator O'Toole for sponsoring the authority related bills. It should be noted that S-1811, if enacted, only applies to New Jersey, whereas the other four bills apply to authorities governed by bi-state agencies and therefore, where required, would need to be approved by those states as well.

S-1811 compliments Made in America laws that are already on the books here in New Jersey by extending them to public institutions of higher education as well as providing more effective enforcement and disclosure to the public. It is important to note that there is a waiver process for hardship cases based upon cost and availability. Each of the other four bills apply to a specific bi-state agency, including the Port Authority of NY/NJ, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, the Delaware River Bay Authority, and the Delaware River Port Authority. For each of these authorities, the legislation requires that manufactured goods, including iron and steel, are made in America. Also in these bills are waiver procedures for certain hardships in contracting.

At the heart of this issue is of course, job creation. There has been a lot of discussion by the legislature about which programs and which legislation best creates jobs. That conversation has included corporate subsidies, and whether you agree or disagree that these subsidies actually create jobs is open to debate. But one fact we can't ignore related to corporate subsidies is that they are extremely expensive – costing taxpayers \$3.5 billion since 2010, including \$540 million for the current fiscal year. Of course, it is difficult to quantify if these subsidies actually create jobs. However, that problem does not exist with the package of bills before you today. These bills translate into direct job creation because orders for American made manufactured products are, of course, made by Americans. The more orders for goods that are placed, the more workers are required to fill them. It's a simple equation with a simple result. Made in America equals Jersey jobs. Please stand behind American workers and vote in favor of Made in America legislation.

Sincerely,

Charles Wowkanech  
President

Laurel Brennan  
Secretary-Treasurer

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