



## American Foundry Society 2019 Federal Priority Issues

The American Foundry Society (AFS) strongly supports the continued implementation of a pro-manufacturing agenda to ensure U.S. metalcasters can continue to compete in today's global economy. Metalcasters urge Congress and the administration to work together to enact growth-oriented, job-creating policies in 2019-2020, including the following AFS priorities to advance the nation's economic security and the vitality of the U.S. metalcasting industry:

### 1. **Infrastructure: Invest in Our Nation's Critical Infrastructure**

Transportation infrastructure facilitates broad economic growth and directly affects the competitiveness of the U.S. metalcasting industry. AFS supports increased long-term federal funding improvements and investment for our nation's critical infrastructure and transportation systems (highways, bridges, railroads, mass transit systems, airports, seaports, pipes, pipelines and power lines).

These assets are in urgent need of repair, maintenance and sustainable investment. In addition, AFS also strongly supports:

- Modernization of our nation's infrastructure systems, in particular, for highways, bridges, and rail, as well as our drinking water and wastewater systems;
- Reforming a broken permitting and approval system that adds years of delay and costs to projects while ensuring appropriate review;
- Expanded use of public-private partnerships for infrastructure development;
- Ensuring adequate investment for water infrastructure, as many of our nation's water and wastewater systems are more than 100 years old, and government and industry studies have estimated the nation's water infrastructure needs over the next two decades in the hundreds of billions of dollars;
- Expanding the Buy American-made iron and steel provisions for transportation and water projects that ensure metal castings used for the nation's infrastructure projects are produced in the United States; and,
- Strengthening our energy infrastructure.

### 2. **Workforce: Invest in the Next Generation of Skilled Technical Workers**

Further complicating our ability to grow is the fact that metalcasters face a severe lack of workers (skilled and unskilled). Manufacturers have around half a million jobs to fill. A new study released in November by Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute reveals that more than 2 million manufacturing jobs could go unfilled over the next decade if we do not rethink dramatically the way we attract, train and retain talented workers. In addition to the 2.4 million manufacturing jobs expected to be unfilled in the next 10 years, there are another 2.69 million vacancies expected to be created by retiring workers in the same time frame.

Negative perceptions of manufacturing, deficient technological skills amid the rise in automation, and a large part of the workforce set to retire are driving the labor shortage. The bipartisan Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (Perkins V) Act signed into law in 2018 was an important step forward. AFS urges Congress to ensure federal training and educational programs receive adequate funding to maintain a skilled and dynamic technical workforce. We are calling on the bipartisan congressional leadership to make workforce challenges a top priority under the new Congress.

3. **International Trade: Aggressively Combat Unfair Trade Practices Against the U.S. Metalcasting Industry**

Too often, certain foreign countries have engaged in unfair and unlawful trade practices, such as subsidies, dumping, and currency manipulation, which result in an uneven playing field and undercut the viability of U.S. metalcasting industry. AFS will continue to work with Congress, the administration, including the U.S. Trade Representative, Commerce Department, and the International Trade Commission, to continue to combat unfair trade practices against the U.S. metalcasting industry, and to ensure changes to new trade deals are beneficial to U.S. metalcasters. The Trump administration is in the process of pursuing new trade deals with Japan, and the European Union and the UK. The Trump administration is also looking to secure passage of the renegotiated NAFTA deal, now called the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, in 2019.

4. **Environment: Actively Engage and Protect Metalcasters from Harmful Regulations**

In recent years, AFS members have faced a deluge of new regulatory mandates from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal agencies. The regulatory landscape in Washington has improved dramatically as the administration has repealed some burdensome regulatory mandates. AFS will:

- Continue to work with the EPA on the replacement to the Clean Power Plan, the proposed Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, which provides a robust and achievable approach to addressing carbon emissions through a collaborative approach between the federal government, states, and all stakeholders;
- Continue to work with EPA on revisions to the Iron and Steel Foundry National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) for Major Sources, last updated in 2008;
- Continue to engage with EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to finalize the rescission of the 2015 Waters of the United States rule (WOTUS) and promulgate a new definition of WOTUS;
- Continue to engage on EPA's proposed Lead & Copper rule and other relevant water measures;
- Continue to push for improved regulatory analysis in the rulemaking process; and,
- Continue to highlight industry sustainability activities with policymakers.

5. **Safety & Employment: Actively Engage and Protect Metalcasters from Harmful Regulations**

Metalcasters share a mutual goal of a safe, communicative and productive workplace. Collaboration and thoughtful rulemaking between our industry and governmental agencies, as well as fairness and balance in our labor law system, are essential to achieving that goal.

AFS will:

- Participate in upcoming OSHA rulemakings;
- Engage in the new proposed overtime rule; and,
- Engage in National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) related issues.

AFS will continue to work closely with the Department of Labor, key stakeholders and Congress on workplace safety and employment matters.

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