



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
25TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

September 30, 2014

The Honorable André J. Gudger
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy
3330 Defense Pentagon
Room 3B854
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Gudger,

Congratulations on your recent assignment as Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary. I write to you today to express strong support for your mission to ensure robust and innovative industrial capabilities and to urge your consideration for the creation of a manufacturing institute focused on optics and photonics, the science and application of light.

As a representative of a region with a strong history in manufacturing for defense applications, I was proud to work with your predecessor on the National Network of Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI) program. In fact, Ms. Broitman and your colleague, Ms. Adele Ratcliff, joined me in Rochester earlier this year to tour the innovative research and manufacturing facilities I am so proud to represent. The visit was an excellent chance to highlight the significant opportunities available to regions like the Rochester area that bring together world-class research universities and colleges, manufacturers, and a highly equipped workforce.

Starting with optics and photonics giants such as Kodak, Xerox, and Bausch and Lomb, the Rochester region has long been a leader in this field. From the University of Rochester's Laboratory for Laser Energetics and advanced research at RIT to companies such as Rochester Precision Optics and Exelis, 17,000 of our community's jobs are in the optics and photonics industry. What the world needs most in optics and photonics is already being developed right here in Rochester.

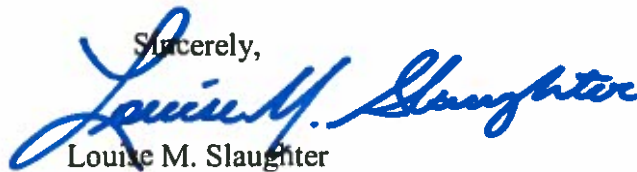
Rochester's innovations are not only a source of local pride; they make our nation more secure at home and abroad. Innovations pioneered in Rochester led to the development of the night-vision goggles used during the raid that killed Osama bin Laden and the sniper scopes that took down the Somali pirates holding Captain Phillips captive. These two particular achievements were developed on decades-old equipment salvaged from an old manufacturing line – imagine what these local innovators could create with updated tools.

As you may know, the United States has been the world leader in deploying optics and photonics research to power cutting edge technologies, but global competition has put this leadership position at risk. New opportunities in optics and photonics-driven fields — including remote imaging, solar power, touch screen sensors, high-efficiency lighting, genome characterization and high-tech manufacturing, — offer even greater potential to enhance our quality of life, safeguard our health and security, and drive economic growth, job creation and global competitiveness.

Evident from the many substantive responses to the Department's NNMI Request for Information, the Rochester region is joined by communities around the country with a proud history in optics and photonics. An NNMI in optics and photonics would create an environment that promotes commercialization by bringing together researchers and innovators in academic institutions, small and large companies, and government laboratories. By taking a leadership role in the formation of such an NNMI, the U.S. government would not only stimulate economic growth and job creation, but also launch a new frontier of opportunities for national security innovation.

During my time in Congress, I have fought to create, protect, and expand manufacturing policies and programs that support American manufacturers, and I hope to partner with you to continue that important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Louise M. Slaughter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Louise" being the most prominent part.

Louise M. Slaughter