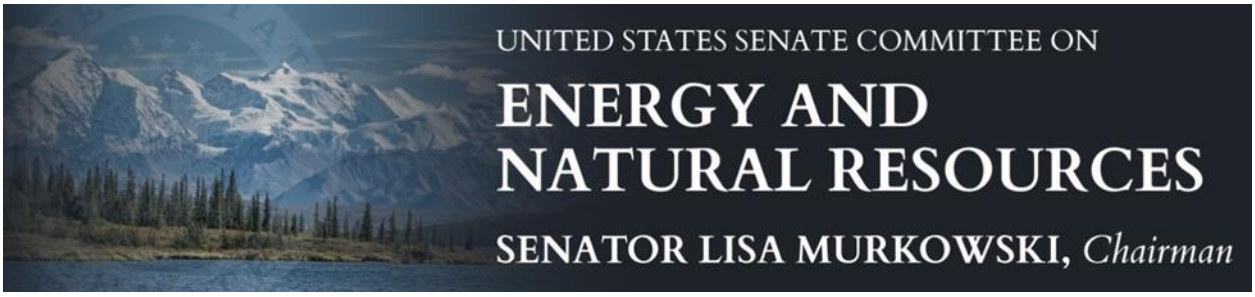

Opening Statement
Oversight Hearing on Innovative Technologies in Advanced Manufacturing
Chairman Lisa Murkowski
April 12, 2016

Good morning, everyone. The Committee will come to order as we begin our hearing on the status of innovative technologies in advanced manufacturing.

We will be discussing several technologies that are either already in place or being developed. Some of the discussion may be pretty technical, but you don't have to be a rocket scientist to wrap your head around advanced manufacturing.

What is going on in advanced manufacturing is certainly worthy of our attention. Jobs in these sectors employ almost 24 million people in the United States, or approximately 13 percent of our workforce.

Advanced manufacturing accounts for about 19 percent of our national GDP, as well, with an overall economic impact of around $3.1 trillion per year.

While advanced manufacturing merits greater attention, we also need to do a better job of preparing a workforce for the high-quality jobs these industries are creating. With two million manufacturing jobs projected to be perpetually unfilled by 2025, there is a growing skills gap in our country that must be addressed.

The reality is that we have both enormous challenges and unprecedented opportunities. And I hope today we can glean insights from several perspectives – industry, university, market, and National Labs – on what we can do at the federal level to positively impact the advanced manufacturing skills gap.

This hearing is also designed to inform us about the significant innovation taking place in advanced manufacturing. This is a "look down the road," if you will. It is a chance for us to hear about technologies that are emerging, to gauge how they might affect our energy needs, our mineral needs, and workforce development issues, and then to understand the challenges that need to be overcome.

There's plenty happening at the Department of Energy, from combined heat and power improvements, to research and development in critical minerals, to additive manufacturing

that has already advanced to the point where fully functional Shelby Cobras can be created via a 3D printer.

With this hearing we will also examine whether federal programs meant to support innovation are working as intended, and whether they are properly oriented to help our advanced manufacturing industries innovate, compete, and thrive. And that brings us to the work that the Advanced Manufacturing Office is doing, in collaboration with the National Laboratories, universities, and industry. What areas are working best? Which areas can we aim to improve?

I have consistently advocated technology-neutral policies for the energy sector, and I would do the same for manufacturing. Instead of picking one favored technology, and plowing most or all of our limited federal research dollars into it, I am convinced the better path is to support research into a wider range of possible "winners" – and to let markets and consumers determine which are best. I suspect that our panel today will underscore how crucial that approach is to the advanced manufacturing world.

In this Committee, we are on a good track. As a result of our commitment to work together, our bipartisan energy bill includes several provisions to boost innovation in advanced manufacturing. That includes a modified version of the Carbon Fiber Recycling Act sponsored by Senator Cantwell, and the Smart Manufacturing Leadership Act from Senators Shaheen and Alexander.

So I am pleased we have our witnesses before us today to share their thoughts and their comments. I would like to particularly recognize and welcome a friend from Ketchikan, my home town, here with us today. A long way to talk about advanced manufacturing and what that means in even some very remote and isolated parts of the country. It is a pleasure to have you all here today.

And I will now turn to Ranking Member Cantwell for her comments.

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