



TED STRICKLAND
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

February 9, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As governor of a manufacturing state, I am acutely aware of the unique economic challenges facing such states in these difficult economic times. Despite best efforts, too many factories have shuttered and too many citizens have been laid off. While economic recovery requires a multifaceted approach on the part of business and government, one component of our recovery effort, especially here in the Midwest, must be to promote domestic manufacturing.

I am writing to urge you to consider one way to help promote manufacturing and put nearly 100,000 Americans to work: a competitive dual procurement from two great American companies, Northrop Grumman and Boeing, for the next generation of aerial refueling tankers. I am particularly supportive of the opportunities a dual procurement would provide for General Electric, an important employer in Ohio. Specifically, it is my understanding that dual procurement would create and sustain hundreds of General Electric jobs in Ohio. In addition to providing immediate economic benefits, a competitive dual procurement strategy ensures the Air Force will get better tankers at a better price and much faster than through a sole source award.

The Department of Defense is currently preparing to rerun competitive bidding on the next generation aerial refueling tanker. The capabilities afforded by this next generation tanker are desperately needed to modernize the Air Force's ageing fleet of KC-135's, which has been in continuous operation since the Eisenhower administration. Both Northrop Grumman and Boeing say that, if awarded the contract, it will support nearly 50,000 high-paying jobs here in the United States. However, if the Pentagon were to speed up replacement of old KC-135's by competitively buying tankers from both companies, the combined effort would support almost 100,000 skilled jobs for nearly two decades.

High-paying, stable manufacturing jobs such as those provided by the tanker project could help to jump start an economic recovery. By investing in two proven American contractors, you can send a clear message about your faith in American workers and war fighters. Given the significant benefits of a competitive dual procurement program, I strongly urge you to move forward in this direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted Strickland".

Ted Strickland
Governor, State of Ohio