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OneRail Coalition Event Highlights Importance of Rail Supply Manufacturing to U.S. Economy, Well-Paying U.S. Jobs

WASHINGTON, DC, October 27, 2017 - Members of the OneRail Coalition underscored the importance of rail industry manufacturing and supply companies as a source of thousands of well-paying U. S. jobs at “**Putting America to Work,**” a **Forum on Rail Manufacturing in the U.S.**, hosted by the **House Manufacturing Caucus** and held October 24 in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center.

At the event, senior rail industry manufacturing executives gave an overview of the economic impact of their U.S. facilities and workforce on the communities they serve. Moderated by OneRail Director **Anne Canby**, panelists **Scott Sherin**, Alstom North America Vice President, Marketing & Strategy; **Robin Stimson**, Passenger Rail Systems Mobility Division Siemens Vice President, Business Development; **Jim Shirvinski**, Progress Rail Senior Vice President of Engineering; and **Charmin Tillman**, GE Transportation Chief Marketing Officer provided insights on the technological innovations they are utilizing in their products and manufacturing processes, the broad reach of their supply chains, the diverse range of job skills in their workforces, and the benefits of Buy America requirements.

“Rail manufacturing and maintenance supports hundreds of jobs in Delaware and thousands across the U.S. It is critical that we fight for programs that support infrastructure, manufacturing, and 21st Century workforce development,” **Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)** Co-Chair of the Senate Competitiveness Caucus stated in remarks at the event.

Sherin noted that Alstom’s products and services encompass passenger and transit rolling stock and signaling for passenger and freight rail. He said Alstom’s network of 2,500 employees in 20 locations throughout North America delivers “global expertise with local know-how.” He talked about the “manufacturing multiplier effect” of the company’s product lines, and said the “Buy America” program requires domestic and foreign direct investment, preserving jobs and technical expertise.

Siemens’ Stimson discussed the company’s railcar manufacturing hub in Sacramento, California. Uniquely American designs produced at the facility include light rail vehicles, electric locomotives for Amtrak, and trainsets for the new Brightline commuter rail service in Florida. He talked about the growth in the company’s U.S. employee base since the 1980s, confirming Siemens’ dedication to workforce training, recruitment and development through partnerships with universities, community colleges and vocational schools.

Progress Rail’s Shirvinski said that the company is among the world’s largest integrated and diversified suppliers of railroad and transit products, including rolling stock and infrastructure for freight rail and transit. While the company has a strong U.S. presence, with its headquarters in Albertville, Alabama, he said it also has a global presence, with operations in

14 countries. “We invest globally in our facilities, but we also pay close attention to investing in the smaller communities in which we live and work - such as our Muncie, Indiana, facility, which had been vacant for 12 years prior to our operations coming to the area. It is important to bring life back to American manufacturing communities to help the rail business grow and thrive,” Shirvinski shared. Progress Rail’s career opportunities in the U.S. and around the world cover a wide range of both professional and production areas, Shirvinski stated.

Tillman shared that GE is a global company with operations in 180 countries and that the Chicago-based GE Transportation has been operating for over 100 years, and continues to deliver high technology locomotives, services, and digital solutions, helping their global customers deliver goods and services by creating machines and software to move goods safer, cleaner, faster and more reliably than ever before. She also talked about GE’s next-generation jobs arising from their “Brilliant Factory” model, which incorporates advanced manufacturing, and digital technology to optimize manufacturing processes and increase productivity, quality and reliability.

Canby shared a OneRail analysis showing that hundreds of companies with more than 2,600 locations across the U.S. provide the equipment and components that support the nation’s freight and passenger rail infrastructure.

“To ensure the existence of well-paying, skilled jobs in the rail manufacturing and supply sector, we must continue to provide a balanced regulatory environment to allow America’s world-class freight railroads to earn sufficient revenues to invest in their privately-owned networks. U.S. passenger rail operators need a predictable, stable federal funding partnership to provide a share of the capital needed to invest in equipment and infrastructure and support their private sector rail manufacturing/supply partners,” Canby stated. “We are grateful to the House Manufacturing Caucus for hosting today’s Forum, and for underscoring the importance of freight and passenger railroads to jobs and a strong U.S. economy.”

The [House Manufacturing Caucus](#) includes over 100 members, and is co-chaired by Congressmen Tom Reed (NY-23) and Tim Ryan (OH-13). The Caucus examines and promotes policies to help American manufacturers find trained, educated workers, continue to lead the world in developing new industrial technologies, operate on a level playing field with their foreign competitors, and obtain the capital they need to thrive.

[OneRail](#) is a coalition of railroad stakeholders including rail owners and operators (freight, intercity, commuter, heavy & light rail), rail labor, the rail manufacturing and supply sector, states supporting passenger rail operations and rail advocates. Learn more at www.onerail.org; follow OneRail on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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