



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

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Governor Rell Announces New ‘Lean Manufacturing’ Initiative for Aerospace and Defense Suppliers

Training Program to Help Grow Jobs at Small- and Medium-Sized Firms

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced a \$2 million, two-year initiative that will strengthen Connecticut’s aerospace and defense industry supplier base using “lean manufacturing” techniques to boost productivity and efficiency.

The initiative, to be managed by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), is intended to help grow jobs at small- and medium-sized suppliers to the nation’s prime defense contractors.

“Many of Connecticut’s manufacturers have undergone dramatic changes and overcome great obstacles in recent years to compete in the global economy,” Governor Rell said. “Manufacturing accounts for about 15 percent of our state’s economic output, and with this initiative we can help these suppliers meet the needs of prime defense contractors in Connecticut and around the nation.

“The bottom line here is jobs,” the Governor said. “The better positioned these suppliers are to snap up contracts the more likely they are to expand and hire more people. An investment such as this can pay dividends for years to come.”

Some 200 companies are expected to participate in the initiative. Companies can choose from a variety of training programs featuring nationally and locally recognized experts in lean manufacturing – a process that improves efficiency by analyzing the flow of information and materials within a manufacturing environment. The state funding will partially reimburse Connecticut companies for the training expenses.

Among the training options available will be the Supplier Excellence Alliance (SEA) program. SEA is a national organization made up of the major U.S. aerospace, defense and space prime contractors whose goal is to accelerate supply chain performance. Members include Pratt & Whitney, Hamilton Sundstrand, Sikorsky, Bombardier, Northrop Grumman, and BAE Systems.

Connecticut now joins California as the only states in the nation to offer a nationally recognized approach to supplier development.

“We’re always looking for new ways to assist manufacturers in keeping and growing jobs in Connecticut,” Governor Rell said. “This initiative, which is supported by our Aerospace Components Manufacturers cluster, is one more way for us to take a relatively small investment and use it to grow as many jobs as possible.”