



February 25, 2010

The Honorable Richard Lugar
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Lugar,

Vincennes University (VU) wishes to submit a formal request for funding to support the *Gibson County Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics*.

The purpose of VU's request is to purchase cutting-edge advanced manufacturing industry emulation equipment to be used exclusively in the new Gibson County Center. The equipment will significantly increase VU's capacity to train and retrain new and incumbent workers for advanced manufacturing and logistics job opportunities throughout Indiana's southwestern industrial corridor.

Indiana remains among the most manufacturing intensive states in the nation; manufacturing also accounts for among the highest percentage of total Hoosier jobs. Within the southwestern industrial corridor alone, manufacturing and logistics jobs employ nearly 100,000 workers. In a region of one million people, this equates to about one in every ten employees. VU has a long history of serving Hoosier employers, and continues to operate Indiana's largest advanced manufacturing degree programming at the associate and baccalaureate levels. For these reasons, I believe that VU is uniquely poised for success in delivering this initiative.

The State of Indiana, through the Indiana General Assembly, has committed \$5 million in cash to be applied toward construction. In addition, VU has committed \$4 million, with an additional \$3 million being applied from university endowments. The VU Foundation has also purchased the property at an estimated value of \$1.6 million. The city of Fort Branch has likewise committed \$350,000 toward infrastructure improvements. In total, this project will have a net investment of \$13,950,000.

VU's request supports the mission and vision of the institution. I believe that it is unique in its ability to enhance the learning experience of new, incumbent, and displaced workers by integrating industry emulation training and 21st century workforce development skills. The initiative also supports the Governor's *Strategic Economic Development Plan*, which aims to prepare Indiana workforce for success in the new economy through education and training that responds to industry-driven and industry-demanded skills and competencies.

I am pleased to endorse this request, and I kindly ask for your consideration in allowing Vincennes University, Indiana's first college, the opportunity to remain at the forefront of academic programming and training opportunities that support Hoosier advanced manufacturing and logistics industries.

Respectfully,

Richard E. Helton, Ph.D.
President