

LARSON JOINS CONNECTICUT DELEGATION IN PUSHING FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISPLACED UTC WORKERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2000

LARSON JOINS CONNECTICUT DELEGATION IN PUSHING FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISPLACED UTC WORKERS WASHINGTON - U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) has joined the Connecticut Congressional delegation in urging U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman to release \$7.2 million in funds from the Labor Department's National Reserve Account to help workers affected by restructuring at United Technologies Corporation (UTC) transition to new jobs. State and local job assistance resources were deemed insufficient to meet the transition needs of 2,674 workers at UTC's Hamilton-Sundstrand, Sikorsky, and Pratt & Whitney divisions.

In a letter dated May 17 (attached), the delegation expressed its strong support for a proposal developed by a newly-created Labor Management Committee (comprised of the unions representing workers at each division) in cooperation with the Employment & Training Institute, the United Labor Agency, and the Connecticut Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor takes 60 days from the date of receipt to review any funding proposal. The proposal from the State of Connecticut, which filed the proposal on behalf of the UTC workers, was received on April 21.

"These workers helped build UTC and they deserve more than a pink slip and a shove out the door," said Senator Chris Dodd. "They deserve concrete help and job assistance this critically important funding can provide, ultimately ensuring we do everything in our power to assist them as they go through this very tough time."

"Through this letter we are reaffirming our commitment to do whatever we can to assist those workers who have been hurt by the restructuring at UTC," Senator Joseph Lieberman said. "We can't guarantee them a quality job, but we can and should help them acquire the skills and tools they need to compete in this changing labor market. That is exactly what the funding we are requesting is intended to do, to make the federal government a partner in this transitional effort and to make good on our obligations to those workers and their families."

"Our delegation has pulled together time after time to support the workers of United Technologies, in particular during the recent restructuring process," said Congressman Sam Gejdenson (D-2nd). "Today we are standing together to call for federal assistance to minimize the disruption in their lives and to help ensure that these workers have access to high-tech training."

"These workers deserve our help in making the transition to new careers in the state," said Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-6th). "We are committed to securing the resources necessary to provide them with the training and employment services they need to get back on their feet."

"The thousands of highly specialized workers left behind by UTC's restructuring need assistance to move into new positions. In southwestern Connecticut, there are plenty of employers looking for motivated people to fill jobs. The only thing keeping them apart is the training these workers need to do these jobs well," said Rep. Christopher Shays (R-4th).

"Assistance from the federal government would help make this marriage happen."

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-3rd) said, "I am proud to join my colleagues in calling on the Secretary of Labor to approve this \$7.2 million in career transition services. The hard working men and women of Connecticut's aerospace industry have provided years of experience and knowledge to build the highest quality aircraft for our soldiers. It is their efforts that has maintained U.S. leadership world wide. At this critical time, it is vital that they are provided will every tool available to ensure the well-being of their families and of their future."

"With changes in the global economy, we must make sure that Connecticut families are not left behind. This \$7.2 million grant will provide former UTC employees with specialized high tech job training, and assistance in their job search. I will continue to press U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman to ensure that our workers transition needs are met," said Congressman Jim Maloney (D-5th).

Congressman John Larson (D-1st) said, "The thousands of UTC workers who have done so much to support the economy of not only Connecticut, but our nation as well, clearly deserve this assistance from the federal government. The best way that we can help ease the devastation of job loss is by giving people the skills and education they need to re-join the workforce. I am hopeful that the case put forward by my Congressional delegation colleagues will convince Secretary Herman to support this grant for our state's most valuable resource: its workers."

Key features of the plan include:

- Provision of career transition services statewide, fully integrating services offered by One-Stop Centers and others, while offering customized services to hourly and salaried personnel through one or more dedicated centers.

- Maximum utilization and integration of all training resources, including the UTC Employee Scholar Program, training benefits for hourly workers, and state and grant resources.

- A special technology initiative to equip dislocated UTC employees to compete in the high technology economy.

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May 17, 2000

The Honorable Alexis M. Herman
Secretary of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Herman:

We are writing on behalf of the workers of the United Technologies Corporation (UTC) to urge your support for a \$7.2 million grant from the National Reserve Account under the auspices of the Job Training Partnership Act (in effect until June 30, 2000) and the Workforce Investment Act (in effect after June 30, 2000).

Over the past year, UTC announced a major restructuring plan that will eliminate 2,674 jobs at its Pratt & Whitney, Hamilton Sundstrand and Sikorsky divisions over the next year. These layoff announcements have been devastating to the workers, their families, and to the economy of the region. In an era of tight defense budgets and weak foreign economies, these workers have fewer opportunities in the aerospace sector. Many will need new skills to remain competitive in today's job market. Unfortunately, state and local resources are inadequate to meet the needs of such a large number of dislocated workers. Federal support is urgently needed.

The union leaders of these companies, with the support of UTC management, have formed a Labor Management Committee to help workers that have been displaced or soon will be. The Committee, in cooperation with the Employment & Training Institute, the United Labor Agency, and the Connecticut Department of Labor, has developed an approach to help workers transition into new careers. The proposal will provide career transition services that will be fully integrated with those offered by One-Stop Centers. It will also offer customized services to UTC personnel through one or more dedicated centers. In addition, the proposal will maximize integration of all training resources, including benefits currently offered by UTC. Furthermore, resources will be focused on training that will help dislocated employees to compete in today's high technology economy.

Approving this application will provide vital support to this effort and help to ensure that mid-career men and women will continue to be competitive in an evolving job market. We strongly urge your support for this request.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senator

JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN
United States Senator

SAM GEJDENSON
Member of Congress

CHRISTOPHER SHAYS
Member of Congress

NANCY L. JOHNSON
Member of Congress

ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress

JAMES H. MALONEY
Member of Congress

JOHN B. LARSON
Member of Congress

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