

LARSON ANNOUNCES ECONOMIC TASK FORCE GRANT

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LARSON ANNOUNCES ECONOMIC TASK FORCE GRANT HARTFORD- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) announced today that the U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded a \$100,000 grant to fund and staff the Hartford Region's Economic Adjustment Task Force that first met on August 29. The task force is a collection of labor, government and civic organizations that will meet regularly to design and implement a strategy to effectively help the area's displaced defense workers from UTC.

The Task Force is directly related to the pilot project headed by Cyrena Eitler from the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment that is based on legislation proposed by Larson. The bill, which is currently before committee, would create a federal office specifically to work with communities severely impacted by job layoffs, much in the same way the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deals with areas impacted by natural disasters. The Hartford Region was chosen as the area to implement the pilot project because of the announcement of large-scale UTC layoffs in the past year. The pilot program created a "one-stop shopping" center for federal assistance for displaced UTC workers and maximize re-training and education resources for those affected.

"I am very pleased that this grant came through," said Larson from Washington. "This project, including the community task force, is the only one of its kind in the nation, and with the right coordination between labor, community groups and government, this partnership is going to change the way we look at large-scale layoffs concentrated in one region. I think this is an important step in showing that this pilot program is certainly going to be a success, and will serve as a model for the rest of the nation. This funding ensures that the task force is better equipped for the job we have ahead of us."

Members of the task force include: The Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Connecticut Community College system, the AFL-CIO, the Machinists Union, the Greater Hartford Building and Trades Council, the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council, the CT Department of Labor, the CT Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Connecticut Urban Legal Initiative, who actually applied for the \$100,000 grant.

The check was presented by Ty Beach from the Philadelphia office of the Department of Commerce to Nell Jessup Newton, the Dean of the UCONN Law School, and Bill Breetz, both of the Connecticut Urban Legal Initiative as well as Mike Meotti of the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council.

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