



STATE SENATOR

CATHY OSTEN

Representing Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Marlborough, Montville, Norwich & Sprague

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September 27, 2019

Sen. Osten: New Data Shows Manufacturing Pipeline Making a Difference in Eastern CT

State Senator Cathy Osten (D- Sprague) said today that new data released this week at the Eastern Workforce Investment Board meeting and at the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance annual meeting shows investments in workforce pipeline training are paying off handsomely for eastern Connecticut: the region saw manufacturing job growth increase by 11.3% from 2015 to 2019, which is four times the state average and more than twice the national average.

In fact, two-thirds of all manufacturing employment growth in Connecticut over that time period occurred in the 41 EWIB towns in eastern Connecticut that range from Union and Thompson to Stonington, Old Lyme, Colchester and Coventry.

“Ten years ago, eastern Connecticut had the ninth-worst labor market in America. Now we have the 13th best. That’s a big deal, and it’s because we have used state workforce dollars to increase employment and reduce unemployment,” said Sen. Osten, who is Senate Chair of the Appropriations Committee and a longtime supporter of the legislature’s various manufacturing pipeline initiatives. “I and others have supported and defended millions of dollars in state spending to keep people learning trades and working and making manufacturers profitable in Eastern Connecticut. It has been successful, but we have to continue our investments because the need for manufacturing jobs in Connecticut is great and it’s growing.”

“When you take a step back and consider the regional coordination required to fuel a region that has catapulted to 13 of 380 areas across the country when it comes to manufacturing growth, you get a real appreciation for the dedication of the 30 or so partners that we get to work with for the Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative,” said EWIB President and CEO John Beauregard. “The MPI has completed 61 training classes and made 1,500 job placements in the past three years. When the partners selected Senator Osten for their State Legislative Champion recognition, I think we all felt that the sustainability of the initiative was key to our region’s economic future, and Senator Osten was illustrating that understanding through her leadership in Hartford. Collectively, we all share the opinion that we’re just scratching the surface and, with continued funding, we’re looking for similar results in the future.”

“Our Board is very appreciative of the State of Connecticut for its investment and commitment to the MPI,” said Mark Hill, EWIB Chief Operating Officer. “State investments have allowed our team to take the program to another level to benefit our community and workforce. Eighty percent of our placements are people without formal manufacturing experience, yet employers report they perform extremely well on the job. These people are getting an opportunity thanks to the leadership of the State of Connecticut. The MPI has proven adept at finding talent and producing a ‘win-win’ for our employers and jobseekers”.

The Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) is a non-profit agency mandated through the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The EWIB oversees a network of workforce-related programs funded from a variety of sources including the operations of the region's American Job Centers.

The organization is governed by a Board of Directors, which evaluates the regional workforce investment system. The private sector majority Board is comprised of representatives from regional businesses, state agencies, organized labor, and local educational institutions. The EWIB works to identify the changing needs among employers and workers in its 41 town service delivery area. It develops a strategic consensus among community leaders to align training programs to meet the needs of local employers in a manner that keeps Eastern Connecticut at the forefront of industry and technology. It also is expanding the MPI across other Connecticut regions, most recently into the New Haven area.