

Testimony of Michael Canty

President & CEO

Alloy Bellows and Precision Welding, Inc.

On behalf of the National Small Business Association



**Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste
Management and Regulatory Oversight Hearing:**

“American Small Businesses’ Perspective on Environmental Protection Agency Regulatory Actions”

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Good afternoon. I want to thank the Senate Environment and Public Works Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Rounds, Ranking Member Markey, and all of the subcommittee members for holding this important hearing and allowing me the opportunity to testify to share my perspectives on several of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) regulatory actions.

My name is Michael Canty. I have been in the business world for almost 40 years, after completing graduate school in 1976. Most of my work career has been with small manufacturing companies – those businesses with fewer than 500 employees. I am currently the President & CEO of Alloy Bellows & Precision Welding Inc., located in Cleveland, Ohio. I currently have 135 employees and two facilities, up from about 25 employees just 10 years ago when I took over the company.

I am proud to be here representing not only my company, but also the National Small Business Association (NSBA)—the nation's first small-business advocacy organization, with more than 65,000 small businesses in every industry across the country. NSBA is a uniquely member-driven and staunchly nonpartisan organization—where I currently serve as an Associate Trustee.

I also have public service experience as a council member for two years, and mayor of the Village of Bentleyville for eight years, a small community in northeast Ohio. I serve on the Board and various committees of the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) in Cleveland; I am an active member in the Greater Cleveland Partnership; and I serve as a Council Member for Governor Kasich's Common Sense Initiative (CSI) in Columbus, Ohio. CSI was set up to review all proposed agency regulations as to their costs and benefit effects on small businesses, verify the need of proposed regulations, insure that all affected stakeholders are involved in the drafting of regulations, and to improve the effectiveness of those regulations that are put into law.

As a result of my diverse background, my comments regarding regulations and the EPA are salted with experiences stemming from both the private and public sector. A former elected official myself, I recognize how difficult a job each of the elected officials on this subcommittee has in their work, regardless of party affiliation.

In recent years, the EPA has been one of the most prolific federal regulatory agencies in terms of issuing sweeping new rules. It has promulgated a seemingly endless stream of regulations and rules including, the Waters of the U.S. rule (WOTUS), as well as the Clean Power Plan, but also smaller, lesser-known but impactful ones as well. While certainly well-intentioned, these regulations have profound impacts on the small-business community, and companies such as Alloy Bellows.

The EPA has a difficult job and a very important one. Certainly, no one wants dirty air or water, and I imagine that most people want to leave the world a better place for the next generation. That includes the small businesses that make up 99.7 percent of U.S. employer

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firms and provide 49.2 percent of private sector employment.¹ Small-business owners such as me want to protect the environment too, but the current state of the regulatory landscape is making it difficult for us to do that and continue to run our businesses.

In an effort to eliminate ALL environmental issues – both real and perceived – the number and cost of EPA regulations seems both overreaching, overly costly, and increasingly more difficult to comply with, especially by small businesses in the U.S. There seems to be a genuine disconnect between the EPA in Washington, D.C. and the small businesses that must actually comply with all the regulations across the country. It appears to me that the EPA simply does not understand the costs associated with some of these regulations as well as the limited resources that most small businesses have. As a result, manufacturing companies are increasingly pressured to source products and components overseas, shift jobs, expertise, and technologies overseas instead of making those components and products in the U.S. Very often, foreign countries do not have the same degree of environmental regulations.

In addition to the enormous volume, the rules and guidelines promulgated by the EPA leave a great deal to interpretation. This results in very inconsistent implementation and enforcement from community to community, and state to state. I have found this in both the public sector and the private sector. In some areas, the interpretations of current and new regulations are severe, costly, and overly enforced, driving even more jobs and business overseas. While in other communities, the interpretations of those same regulations are less severe and costly. This introduces tremendous uncertainty in the regulated community, and provides incentives for companies to relocate or simply outsource the production overseas.

In most cases, the EPA and other agency rules are proposed and implemented with good intentions. However, from my perspective, those regulators generally have little or no business experience and our ability to contribute to the regulatory process as a small business is limited. Elected officials with similar good intentions allow thousands of unnecessary regulations to continue, and thousands more to pass stemming from the complex and often murky legislative process. All this is oftentimes done without knowledge of the significant adverse impact those rules have on small business, the economy, the trade deficit, and American jobs.

Due to the tremendous regulatory requirements we were facing, in the last five years, Alloy Bellows hired a senior-level “Compliance Officer” to help our company keep informed and in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. Between compensation costs, computers, software, supplies, training, and lost employee time, we estimate spending at least \$200,000 or more each year just to stay compliant with the regulations that we know of. Although given the literal volumes of environmental regulations, not to mention the other regulatory agencies, we are fairly confident there are many regulations of which we simply have no knowledge.

We spend much, much more in “defensive protection mode” trying to keep agency officials from the EPA, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and others at bay who

¹ U.S. Small Business Administration, *Frequently Asked Questions*, available at https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/FAQ_Sept_2012.pdf.

seek infractions because they benefit from the fines they levy. As one OSHA inspector told me during a surprise inspection, "... this is how we help to fund our department."

Let me repeat that: an OSHA inspector once flat-out told me during a surprise inspection, "... this is how we help to fund our department." I couldn't decide if I was more shocked at his candidness or angry at the mindset.

Before I discuss a few specific examples of regulations that are impacting my small business, I want to first touch on the overwhelming volume of regulations which currently exists, or will in the near future.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

I often hear from elected officials and agency staffers that this one regulation "only has one form", or that it "only takes 22 minutes" to fill out the required form and submit it. With all of their good intentions, I often wonder if those suggesting what the time commitments are have ever worked at a growing manufacturing company, where resources are scarce, personnel are pressed with company needs, and nothing gets done either in isolation or in 22 minutes.

But the real impact to manufacturing companies, and in fact all companies, is cumulative. It is the proverbial "death by a thousand cuts." Federal regulations require many forms, many different personnel, and almost always take far longer than 22 minutes to complete. The cumulative cost on American business – especially small business – is significant. As I mentioned earlier, we spend a few hundred thousand dollars a year, or more, in an effort to comply with federal regulations. We also spend significantly more on materials and component parts whose suppliers have also borne the cost of federal regulations.

I want to thank the Subcommittee Chairman Rounds for introducing the bipartisan *Regulation Sensibility Through Oversight Restoration* (RESTORE) Resolution. This resolution, if adopted, in my own opinion, would have an enormous impact on my small business – and all small businesses. It would establish a Joint Select Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of rules enacted by federal agencies and analyze the feasibility and options for creating a rules review process in Congress, similar to the Common Sense Initiative set up in Ohio by Governor John Kasich.

From my perspective, the Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Reform as envisioned by the RESTORE Resolution is a strong step toward providing meaningful assistance to the small-business community. I believe the regulatory process desperately needs the review mechanism which the RESTORE Resolution would put in place.

And a review of all existing regulations needs to be added to the process. I am often required to comply with regulations that perhaps served a valuable purpose when they were initially promulgated, but are simply no longer needed and are outdated. With the current level of deference often given the regulatory agency by the courts, the Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Reform will create a valuable check on the power of regulatory agencies. From the

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perspective of a small-business owner, these regulations have the force of law, but they often come from agency staff with which I have no real recourse short of litigation.

Along those same lines, NSBA played a critical role in developing the idea of a National Regulatory Budget and is an ardent supporter of its aim to ensure fairness and commonsense in the federal regulatory process. As one of the first supporters of Sen. Marco Rubio's *National Regulatory Budget Act of 2014*, NSBA recognizes that a regulatory budget will help federal regulators to run their shops the way any small-business owner would—by prioritizing regulations that produce the most benefit for the lowest regulatory cost. Simply put: quality over quantity.

I will provide a few examples of where federal regulations have impacted my small business later on in this testimony. However, first I must express how frustrating it is for me as a small-business owner to sit before you today and not be able to tell you exactly which federal rule or rules make my business so difficult to run and compete with foreign companies. It is simply the cumulative effect of all the regulations. Even just an hour of time working on a regulatory requirement makes a difference, and takes time away from other things I can be doing to run and grow my business. I know this feeling is held by many other small-business owners. In a recent NSBA survey, 33 percent of members indicated that regulatory burdens were one of the top three challenges facing their company.²

Regulatory compliance costs are disproportionately higher for small businesses than their larger counterparts. Firms with less than 20 employees in this country pay \$10,585 per employee in compliance costs, 36 percent higher than medium and large firms.³ Importantly, of that \$10,585, more than \$4,000 was devoted to environmental regulations.⁴ The cost per employee of environmental regulations is incredibly, four times higher for smaller firms than for larger firms.⁵ It is estimated that between 2000 and 2008, between \$175 billion and \$280 billion were spent on environmental regulations.⁶ These statistics are from a few years ago and obviously do not include the Clean Power Plan and the Waters of the U.S. rule. Therefore, I would certainly expect that these figures have also risen significantly in recent years.

It is further disheartening to realize that currently, there does not seem to be any end to the new federal regulations – from the EPA or otherwise. Based on the most recent regulatory agenda, as indicated by the Fall 2015 Unified Agenda of Regulatory Actions, there are currently more than 2,000 regulations being promulgated, and 144 of those are economically significant,

²National Small Business Association, *2015 Mid-Year Economic Report*, 5 available at <http://www.nsba.biz/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Mid-Year-Economic-Report-2015.pdf>.

³Nicole V. Crain et al., *The Impact of Regulatory Costs on Small Firms* 8 (2010), U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, available at <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/The%20Impact%20of%20Regulatory%20Costs%20on%20Small%20Firms%20%28Full%29.pdf>.

⁴*Id.* at 7.

⁵*Id.* at 9.

⁶*Id.* at 27

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meaning they will cost the economy more than \$100 million each.⁷ It is my understanding that 40+ of those are EPA regulations in final stages, and another 60+ EPA regulations being proposed.⁸

This is an untenable situation but it is also a clear answer to the questions often raised by elected officials like “why is American growth so anemic at one-to-two percent the past seven years when the average growth historically is more like 3.5 percent?” and, “why have so many manufacturing jobs disappeared overseas?”

THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT (RFA)

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) was enacted with the understanding that small businesses needed regulatory relief and that regulations promulgated for the largest companies in the world would impose disproportionate burdens on the country’s smallest employers.⁹ The RFA requires that agencies consider the impact of their regulatory proposals on small businesses, analyze equally effective alternatives, and make their analyses available for public comment.¹⁰

When promulgating rules, agencies are required to either certify that the regulation does not have significant impact on a substantial number of small entities or the proposed rule must also contain an initial regulatory flexibility analysis (IRFA). Upon completion of the final rule, the agency must also publish a final regulatory flexibility analysis (FRFA).¹¹

The U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy works diligently to advise regulatory agencies of their requirements under the RFA as well as serve as a voice for the small-business community within the federal government. The Office of Advocacy often schedules training with agency staff and files comments with regulatory agencies with regard to their obligations under the RFA.

Unfortunately those comment letters routinely carry the same two concerns to regulating agencies. Over the past three years, the Office of Advocacy has consistently reported that improper certification of no significant impact on small businesses and inadequate analysis of small business impacts are among the most common comments to agencies. This is troubling, because it means that agencies are continuously neglecting to fully consider the position of small businesses when promulgating regulations. This is certainly not a surprise to me, as a member of NSBA, I have been hearing from other small-business owners for years that it did not feel like regulations were written with us in mind. I have felt this way myself on a number of occasions.

⁷Unified Regulatory Agenda, Fall 2015 *available at*

http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaMain?operation=OPERATION_GET_AGENCY_RULE_LIST¤tPub=true&agencyCode=&showStage=active&agencyCd=0000&Image58.x=29&Image58.y=9&Image58=Submit.

⁸*Id.*

⁹ U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, *Report on the Regulatory Flexibility Act: FY 2015*, 7 *available at* https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/advocacy/FY_15_RFA_Report_newTC_pp1-72.pdf.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 8.

¹¹ *Id.*

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This is best illustrated by the example of the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers' Water's of the U.S. rule, which according to the agencies simply sought to clarify the jurisdiction of the water regulations. In that case, the agencies certified that the new definition would not have a significant impact on small businesses in this country.¹² Respectfully, I could not disagree with that more. The new definition seems set to greatly expand the EPA's jurisdiction and will require many small businesses to get permits in situations where they were not previously required. I simply do not understand how that would not constitute an impact on small businesses. What is even more frustrating is that the Office of Advocacy alerted the EPA to the oversight, requested they withdraw the rule and conduct a fact finding panel before proceeding.¹³ Instead, the EPA ignored the request and finalized the rule, without making any of the suggested changes.¹⁴

The RFA also mandates retrospective rule review by federal agencies, in addition to several executive orders. However, as a small-business owner, I have not at all felt the regulatory burdens being lifted by these measures. Regulations continue to stack on top of each other making it increasingly difficult for me to comply with all of them. The Office of Advocacy even included in its most recent report on the RFA that agencies need to continue to improve with regard to this requirement.¹⁵

THE OHIO COMMON SENSE INITIATIVE

Four years ago when Ohio Governor John Kasich was elected to his first term as Governor, he initiated and passed as his second bill, the Common Sense Initiative. The purpose of this initiative was to create a small nine member Small Business Advisory Council and five member staff, run by the Lt. Governor Mary Taylor, to set up a review process to assess the costs and benefits of all proposed regulations from all Ohio agencies. I have been a member of that nine-member Council for four years.

All proposed agency regulations must run through a review process to assess the costs and benefits of those regulations on small business, insure that all affected stakeholders have strong input into the process, and that the proposed regulations make "common sense". All agency rules, past and new, have a five year horizon, and must be reviewed through the same process every five years.

This program has been an enormous success.

- The number of annually proposed regulations has dropped significantly as agencies first review their own proposals and weed out the bad ones. Through mid-year 2015, 719 rules have been rescinded or amended.¹⁶

¹² *Id.* at 32.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Common Sense Initiative 2015 Mid-Year Report, 3 *available at* <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Portals/0/pdf/CSI/SBAC/2015%20CSI%20Mid-Year%20Report.pdf>.

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- Regulations that pass through the process come out much better, less costly, and have much broader acceptance because all the stakeholders were part of the process.
- The impact on the business community in Ohio has been significantly positive. Businesses now regularly propose to have existing rules reviewed to weed out the outdated and ridiculous regulations. Business costs generally go down, and they become more competitive.
- Elected officials from both parties see the benefits and support the program.

The federal government needs this type of stronger review process at each agency and as a review process for all proposed agency rules. As previously discussed, some programs “exist”, but are less effective than they could be, or should be. That is why there is a clear need for things like the RESTORE Resolution to fundamentally change the landscape of the regulatory environment.

Below are some specific examples to better illustrate the difficulties posed by EPA regulations for small businesses.

STORM WATER REGULATIONS

In the early 2000s, while I was mayor of Bentleyville, the federal EPA promulgated Storm Water Regulations requiring every community to develop, monitor, and report annually on six key areas of water quality at every water and “outflow” location in the community. The EPA, however, refused to give specific guidance on what developed programs would pass before they were developed. Instead, they required the communities to first interpret the regulations, develop the plan, and submit the plan. Only at that point, after all the community resources had been sunk into the plan would the EPA tell the community if the plan was acceptable.

Given this uncertainty, plans differed greatly from community to community. Some communities in hopes of avoiding a rejected plan implemented very costly programs for which the taxpayers (residents and businesses) were ultimately responsible. Some communities, especially smaller ones with limited budgets, were more restrained, but still experienced significant taxpayer costs. And these taxpayer costs are permanent – paid by both residences and businesses alike year after year.

With no specific EPA guidance, some of the community plans were excessive, and some were moderate. But no one knew which plan the EPA actually wanted, as I never received any follow up by the EPA, throughout the eight years that I was in office. Yet, our community is proposing two new tax levies this fall – likely in part to pay for regulatory costs imposed by federal agencies like the EPA.

These things matter to small businesses; costly regulations not directly leveled on small businesses still impact us. Small businesses pay for these regulations through their taxes.

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Furthermore, this lack of clarity adds to the cost of compliance and slows that compliance, making it more difficult for those communities trying to do the right thing.

NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT

The federal and state EPA required certain practices to control the overflow of sewage into Lake Erie. This is, of course, an admirable and necessary goal. To deal with the federal EPA rules, the State of Ohio implemented regulations through state laws in 1972 setting up multi-jurisdictional sewer districts to control and manage sewage. My business is located in the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS). Now, decades later, NEORS with the blessings of the federal and state EPA, imposed “storm water control fees” on every parcel in the four county districts under its control, in order for them to control the overflow of raw sewage. This was a permanent, \$35 million fee, a 19.5 percent increase in their annual operating budget. These are real costs to small businesses. Our small firm received a \$2,000 invoice. Following that, the NEORS implemented an annual 11 percent – 13 percent increase in sewer fees for the next five years, and stated that the annual increase would continue for 25 years. The result is an even greater incentive to move my company out of Cleveland and the NEORS district, and/or to outsource more products and jobs overseas. The latter, of which, I have now been forced to do.

NEW EPA WATER AND STREAM CONTROL REGULATIONS

Under the Waters of the U.S. rule promulgated by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers, those agencies will effectively have oversight over every lake, stream, wet spot, and mud puddle in America. While those agencies have maintained that the rule was simply meant to clarify the existing jurisdiction, I can, as an owner of a small business, say that it has not clarified anything for me. If anything, it has muddied the waters even more. Going forward, I will likely be operating under the assumption that everywhere I operate will be covered, with added permits and costs of compliance for any spot of dirt that holds water for any period of time through the year. Even if politicians and lawyers tell me that this is not the case, when I think about expanding my operations, I will be forced to assume that these regulations will apply to me.

I doubt that I am alone in this respect. This will unfortunately stifle economic growth before it even happens. If we thought that building a new plant, branch office, or industrial building was expensive already due to EPA regulations, and it is, wait until the added cost and construction delays of these new regulations set in.

The result of all of this from my perspective is that rather than expand here, I have begun the process of importing products from overseas. This means a loss of domestic business and jobs to overseas companies. And with these shifts overseas, America loses the trades, the expertise and technical know-how.

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COST OF ENERGY

It is no secret that the EPA, at the insistence of the current administration, and many in Congress, have and will pursue federal regulation of power plants regardless of the impact on the coal industry. The “Clean Power Plan” and other regulations clearly lay out the intentions of the EPA, and from my perspective, the impact on American manufacturing is devastating.

Increased Electric Rates

Many places in the U.S., including Ohio, feel the effects of power plant regulations in a variety of ways. The retirement of many coal-fired power plants because of regulatory costs is already increasing electricity rates. The cost of energy for manufacturing companies, like mine, is going up – way up. In 2015, Alloy Bellows paid 25 percent more per kilowatt/hour than it did in 2013 – and as a manufacturing company, we are energy intensive and energy dependent. That is an enormous increase to our overhead costs. It directly impacts the bottom line of my company, and the competitiveness of my products compared to those from foreign imports.

Coal plants in Ohio produce about 40 percent of the electric energy we consume. However, these plants are currently closing at a rate so fast that it both drives up the cost of electric energy, and produces outages. The outages may be short, but the impact on manufacturing companies like mine includes the shortage period, plus the generally longer period to reboot machinery and computers. These are significant costs to manufacturing companies, affecting their ability to produce and driving their costs up, making them yet again less competitive.

To get around the growing costs and increased outages, companies such as Alloy Bellows are spending tens of thousands of dollars to change out lighting—we have already spent upwards of \$100,000 in lighting options and replaced old equipment with newer, more energy efficient models. While perhaps beneficial to the maker of that equipment, it is a significant added cost to small-business owners like me. It is costs like these that drive small business overseas to source components and products instead of dealing with the costs and hassles posed by the energy situation here.

Federal EPA Required Use of Ethanol

The federal EPA has required the use of up to 10 percent of ethanol in gasoline for years under the assumption, which is now in serious doubt, that it is better for air quality and the environment. The EPA requirement drives up the costs for small business, including for Alloy-Bellows – by driving up the cost of fuel for deliveries, pick-ups, and sales personnel and company cars; while also adding costs to the purchase of supplies and materials delivered by gas driven vehicles; as well as driving up the costs of meals that pay more for food.

I am sure that many of my competitors overseas do not need to endure these added costs from ethanol. We need to take a pause and understand the financial impact of the EPA water and air quality regulations on small businesses, all business, in the growth in the economy and American jobs.

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The discovery and development of natural gas production in the U.S. will undoubtedly replace much of coal use in the U.S. naturally – though it appears that both the current administration and the EPA are seeking to greatly hasten the process. This is dangerous; pushing for such an enormous shift in power generation, without the requisite infrastructure in place requires small businesses to bear the costs of that transition.

USE / DISPOSAL / RECORD KEEPING OF CHEMICALS IN MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing often requires the use of chemicals throughout the manufacturing process from preparation to clean up. No one argues that manufacturers need to insure that hazardous chemicals used in production be handled and disposed of properly. However, the number and complexity of the regulations is simply becoming too much to endure.

For example, Alloy Bellows recently ended its minimal use of the “vapor degreaser” Trichlor in expensive equipment to thoroughly clean difficult parts prior to welding. Our use of Trichlor was minimal due to the EPA concerns and strict reporting requirements. We disposed of used Trichlor properly, though it was expensive to do so. But the costs of compliance and the fears of the EPA reprisals, ultimately forced Alloy Bellows to end the use of Trichlor, adopt another cleaning agent that is not as good, and takes far more time to use, and still requires expensive disposal. Some of those parts were sourced overseas, while some of them required higher, less competitive prices.

Small companies must bear the added costs due to the EPA regulations, making them less competitive to foreign companies, move to less effective, more expensive processes, or simply source those products from outside the U.S.

CHANGES IN ALLOY BELLOWS PHILOSOPHY

I would like to conclude with a sad fact. Over the last 10 years, our philosophy at Alloy Bellows has been to in-source everything the company had sourced elsewhere under the prior ownership – both in the U. S. and from foreign sources. Alloy Bellows has invested millions of dollars in the past 10 years to buy equipment, develop new technologies, hire personnel, and be innovative in our processes. In short, we have become a state of the art, U.S. manufacturing company dedicated to making our products in the U.S. with American labor enabling us to develop proprietary equipment and processes no one else in the world has. Last fall, we were forced to change our business approach due to the rising costs and difficulties of dealing with the ever-increasing amount of federal regulations – including those we see from the EPA.

Next week, I head to both Poland and Germany to set up business relationships with what I expect to be vendors of product that we had previously made in our plant, and would have expected to continue to make, here in the U.S. Unfortunately, the regulatory costs from the EPA, OSHA, Department of Labor, National Labor Relations Board, and other agencies and taxes have just become too much to fight. In June, I will head to China for the same reason regarding another set of technologies and products.

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Alloy Bellows will still make products here in the U.S., but our past philosophy of near total reliance on making our products in our Ohio facility will come to an end. Some of the technology development, and the increase in jobs, will end for us, but so will the costs, hassles, and fears of dealing with thousands of federal regulations that unnecessarily drive up the costs of our products.

Again, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chair Rounds and Ranking Member Markey for holding this hearing and allowing me to testify on behalf of NSBA. Small businesses continue to struggle under the burden of all regulations. However, as I mentioned before, environmental regulations are particularly tough on small businesses, costing more than four times per employee than at larger firms. The need for relief is real and immediate. I hope the subcommittee bears this in mind while it continues to look at ways to lighten the regulatory burden of small businesses around the country.

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Michael is the Owner, President & CEO of Alloy Bellows & Precision Welding, a 75 year old manufacturing company in Cleveland that designs and produces custom engineered products for the power generation, aerospace, semiconductor, and oil & gas markets.

Michael has a BA in Political Science and an MBA in Marketing and Finance. He has over 35 years of business experience dealing with a wide variety of industries that include security hardware, construction equipment, plumbing fixtures, heavy duty truck parts, and industrial bellows assemblies – mostly with smaller enterprises having fewer than 500 employees. Michael’s business background includes business start-ups and turn-around ventures, as well as strategic growth initiatives for several private companies.

Michael has traveled extensively for both business and pleasure throughout Europe, South America, North America, and the Orient, and served on various private company boards over the years. A strong believer in continuous education, Michael taught Marketing and Business Management courses for Ashland College at the penitentiary in Mansfield, Ohio for 3+ years.

Michael has a strong interest in public service. He has served on various public service Boards and Commissions over the years, and raised monies for various charities. He has held elected office as a Precinct Committeeman, a Council member, and eight years as Mayor for his community. As Mayor, he dealt extensively with a wide variety of public issues and organizations at the local, state and federal level. Business development, job creation, the regulatory environment, and education have been key focuses for Michael.

Michael has served, and currently serves, in various board, commission, and committee capacities that include the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE), the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), the National Small Business Association (NSBA), the Governor’s Small Business Advisory Council, Hiram College, and Alliance for Working Together (AWT), etc.

Michael has been a resident of NE Ohio since the early 1980s. He is married to Michele, a Cleveland native, and has a beautiful daughter named Alexis.

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About Us

For more than 80 years, Alloy Bellows & Precision Welding has been supplying the world with metal bellows, bellows assemblies, thin-wall seam-welded tubing, and welding, soldering, brazing and nondestructive testing services. Our dedication to providing high quality products and services on-time and on-budget has allowed us to become a leading supplier to companies, both large and small. Our unique capabilities, flexible manufacturing environment and, most importantly, our Team Members have allowed us to meet our customers' most critical demands.



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Mission & Vision

Our mission is to meet or exceed our customers' needs by providing products and services of premier quality, cost-effectively and on-time.

Our Vision:

Our customers, and future customers, are our #1 priority: Alloy Bellows & Precision Welding's business is based on the belief that every customer and prospect counts! Therefore, every customer and prospect is either future business or lost business, depending upon the quality of our products and services, as well as the responsiveness of our staff. Our success is measured by increasing numbers of satisfied customers, escalating customer retention rates and increased market share. Our growth is testimony to our balanced competence in engineering, quality, production, and sales/marketing.

We are committed to product leadership:

Alloy Bellows will deliver the best product and services possible to the market on-time, all the time. Continuous, high-quality rapid development of new products, services and internal infrastructure is imperative to maintaining and improving our competitive edge. We are committed to exploring the latest innovations and proactively adjusting to meet the ever-changing demands of the markets we serve.

We recognize the importance of being a socially responsible corporation:

Alloy Bellows strictly abides by all laws and regulations in our day-to-day business operations. We rely on the integrity and principles of our employees and believe that upholding high ethical standards is vital to the future health of our organization.

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