

Rep. Elik Partners With Manufacturers To Increase Training, Strengthen Workforce

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SPRINGFIELD - State Representative Amy Elik (R-Alton) partnered with the Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA) Education Foundation to push for the passage of legislation designed to build a workforce of the future by increasing education opportunities and removing barriers that prevent students from exploring jobs in the manufacturing industry.

“We must explore ways to build career pathways for students and remove barriers that make it difficult to enter the workforce,” said Rep. Elik. “I’m proud to partner with the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association on these important issues.”

A bipartisan measure (HB 3307) sponsored by Rep. Amy Elik would allow students to take two years of career training education in place of two years of foreign language study.

An additional measure sponsored by Rep. Elik would create a pilot program to allow manufacturers to open on-site childcare centers at no cost to their employees. Under HB 3308, manufacturers would be required to follow staffing, medication, background check and liability insurance requirements, but would receive an expedited approval process.

“As manufacturers across Illinois seek to fill open positions, it’s important we work collaboratively with employers, educators, and policy makers to find solutions to our workforce challenges, many of which vary region to region. This includes creating opportunities for students to learn about manufacturing through career exploration programs, strengthening training opportunities, and providing solutions to other issues that impact employee well-being, such as childcare,” said Sarah Hartwick, Vice President of Education & Workforce Policy and Executive Director of the IMA’s Education Foundation. “We must apply the creativity and innovation our manufacturers display on shop floors to building a skilled workforce that will lead our state forward for generations to come.”

Nationally, there are nearly 800,000 open jobs in the manufacturing industry, including tens of thousands of available jobs in Illinois. The IMA Education Foundation is dedicated to working with employers, educators, and lawmakers to enact policies that help attract, retain, and grow a skilled workforce. These efforts are vital to ensuring Illinois can continue to experience strong economic growth in the coming decade, as more and more baby boomers are expected to exit the job market and companies will seek to fill the resulting knowledge and experience gaps.

Stay up to date on news and legislative action in the Illinois House of Representatives by visiting RepElik.com or contact Rep. Elik’s district office in Alton at 618-433-8046.