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House of Representatives

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February 20, 2024

The Honorable Gina Raimondo  
Secretary of Commerce  
Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

I write to express my support for MACOM Technology Solutions (MACOM)'s application for the CHIPS Incentives Program – Commercial Fabrication Facilities. If awarded, MACOM would modernize the infrastructure of its foundry, enabling a significant expansion of its compound semiconductor manufacturing capacity.

MACOM is a manufacturer of a wide range of semiconductor components for commercial and defense customers who supply industrial, defense, data center, and telecom customers. MACOM also provides custom radio frequency electronics supporting production of radios, radar, and missiles for the Department of Defense. Programs supported include JSF F-35, Future X-band Radar, Falcon III, Manpack Radio, AMRAAM, JAGM, LRASM, Hell Fire, Hit to Kill, and others. In some cases, MACOM is the sole source supplier for these components, making them critical suppliers for the defense industrial base.

The compound semiconductor wafers that MACOM makes are processed from Gallium Nitride ("GaN") and Gallium Arsenide ("GaAs"). They are increasingly found in advanced military applications. Modernization of equipment at MACOM's foundry will accelerate availability of state-of-the-art GaN technologies while increasing wafer production capacity by about 60 percent. This additional capacity will also allow for onshoring of GaAs product lines that are currently sourced from Taiwan. GaN and GaAs semiconductors offer a lower carbon footprint and unprecedented performance potential at the highest frequency of operation achievable. As a result, compound semiconductors are increasingly found in advanced military and consumer applications. Developing and maintaining a domestic manufacturing base for compound semiconductors will be essential for ensuring an American role in the future of semiconductor production.

In September 2023, Massachusetts and the Northeast Microelectronics Coalition (NEMC), which includes MACOM, was awarded federal funding to establish the NEMC Hub, which aims to increase the manufacturing of microelectronics and semiconductor technologies critical to national defense. However, key elements of MACOM's Lowell foundry have not been upgraded in over 40 years. The air-handler and waste-water treatment systems, for example, are nearing or in some cases past, the end of their useful life and require ongoing maintenance. Aging fab equipment creates a high risk for production interruption and supply chain disruption. Increasing and modernizing MACOM's production capacity will help meet these programmatic goals.

Headquartered in the historic manufacturing city of Lowell, Massachusetts, MACOM's facility is part of a census tract designated disadvantaged by the Council on Environmental Quality. MACOM anticipates that equipment modernization and capacity expansion will add 75 high-paying, skilled jobs.

I support MACOM's application for funding from the CHIPS Incentives Program. I hope that you will give this application your full and fair consideration. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



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Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress