

Murphy Spearheads Bipartisan Effort to Keep Pratt & Whitney Cheshire and East Hartford Facilities Open

As Pratt & Whitney and representatives from the International Association of Machinists (IAM) continue to discuss the company's possible closing of the Cheshire Engine Center and the Connecticut Airfoil and Repair Operations in East Hartford, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) led a bipartisan effort amongst Connecticut elected officials to keep the plants open.

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NEW BRITAIN, CT - As Pratt & Whitney and representatives from the International Association of Machinists (IAM) continue to discuss the company's possible closing of the Cheshire Engine Center and the Connecticut Airfoil and Repair Operations in East Hartford, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) led a bipartisan effort amongst Connecticut elected officials to keep the plants open. The 21 elected officials that joined Murphy in sending a letter to Pratt & Whitney asked the company to consider delaying any closure decisions until late 2010, when the current contract with the IAM expires, allowing time for the economy to improve and for the state to potentially come up with assistance for the company to stay in Connecticut.

"Thinking outside the box, we've come up with a viable alternative to keep people working in Cheshire and East Hartford. Pratt & Whitney should seriously consider what we're proposing, not just because it's the right thing to do for Connecticut's economy, a state which has been very good to Pratt, but because it's a good long-term business strategy to weather this economy and maintain a top-notch workforce for the future," said Murphy.

Murphy's letter, which was signed by Governor Rell, the entire Connecticut Congressional delegation, the Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller and members of the State Legislature representing the affected towns, states: "For years, during challenging economic times, Pratt & Whitney, the State and the company's employees have worked together to ensure the company's ongoing, robust presence in Connecticut. Delaying this decision would allow a holistic approach to the many issues your company faces and avoid a rush to judgment on these specific sites. It would also allow for appropriate time to confer with the State of Connecticut regarding any assistance that could be provided to keep these jobs in Connecticut."

Murphy held a town hall meeting with Pratt & Whitney employees in Cheshire earlier this month who questioned why the company is considering shutting down their Cheshire facility, which in June set a record by delivering \$110 million in revenue for the company.

The Pratt & Whitney employees, including those who would be affected by the potential closures, are some of the most skilled in the nation. Looking past current and temporary economic conditions, Murphy and the signatories of the letter said that any employment action of this magnitude would have short and long-term negative consequences on the company's and the nation's ability to remain competitive.

The letter also requests a meeting with Pratt & Whitney officials to discuss the situation and the alternative option.

The letter is attached, and it is signed by:

U.S. Senator Chris Dodd

U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman

Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro

Congressman John Larson

Congressman Chris Murphy

Congressman Joe Courtney

Congressman Jim Himes

Governor M. Jodi Rell

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal

Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz

Comptroller Nancy Wyman

State Senate President Pro Tempore Donald E. Williams Jr.

Speaker of the House Christopher G. Donovan

State Senator Gary LeBeau

State Senator Thomas Gaffey

State Senator Sam Caliguiri

State Representative Elizabeth Esty

State Representative Vicky Nardello

State Representative Mary Fritz

State Representative Henry Genga

State Representative Tim Larson

State Representative Jason Rojas

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