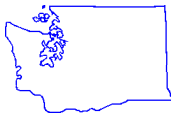**MARIA CANTWELL**
WASHINGTON

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

August 3, 2020

A. Leonard Smith
Seattle Regional Office Director
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, WA 98174

Dear Director Smith,

I am writing in support of the Thurston Economic Development Council Center for Business & Innovation's (CB&I) application to the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program for the Lacey MakerSpace. CB&I is seeking $1,344,000 to acquire equipment and implement programming to train workers and business owners impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Lacey MakerSpace is a partnership between CB&I, the City of Lacey and St. Martin's University that aims to build a full entrepreneurial ecosystem. The partnership provides small businesses with access to specialized and highly technical equipment that is too costly for these businesses to obtain themselves and provides workforce training through classes and one-on-one training.

According to CB&I, grant funding will enable the Lacey MakerSpace to purchase state-of-the art manufacturing equipment to provide training to workers and entrepreneurs. The training program will consist of a short-term program directly related to COVID-19 disruptions, and a long-term ongoing program in support of the area's manufacturing ecosystem. Within the first 36 months of purchasing the new equipment, CB&I and its partners expect to retrain 335 displaced workers. In addition, they expect to train 93 participants each year for the next 10 years as new workers enter the workforce, existing workers look to upgrade their skills and entrepreneurs look to start or improve a manufacturing business. CB&I estimates that this project will generate 2,322 direct, indirect and induced jobs. Projects such as the Lacey MakerSpace will play an important role in long term recovery efforts.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the Lacey MakerSpace project.

Sincerely,

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator