

MADELEINE DEAN
4TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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March 19, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting funding for Kutztown University Engineering and Robotics Lab Equipment Initiative in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, located at 15200 Kutztown Road, Kutztown, PA 19530.

The funding would be used industry-standard equipment in engineering, industrial mechatronics/robotics, and advanced manufacturing to better prepare Kutztown University students to meet regional, state, and national workforce needs. Despite being a hub of technology innovation, Pennsylvania faces a shortage of skilled workers and gaps in critical areas such as robotics/mechatronics and industrial automation. The Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) and the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) have outlined needed credentials in advanced automation manufacturing and robotics. By investing in industry-aligned labs, hands-on training, and a career-oriented curriculum, KU can equip graduates with the technical skill, educational foundation, and certifications employers require. This funding would specifically support initiatives to establish capstone experiences, an automation and mechatronics lab, industrial robotics, and advanced manufacturing.

The proposed initiative would allow KU to increase industry-standard teaching and learning exponentially to meet regional and national needs. The planned investment would allow KU to prepare an Engineering Physics program that could achieve ABET accreditation (peer reviewed quality standard metric for applied/natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology), create a curriculum that would prepare students to take the fundamentals of engineering (FE) exam, and provide students with advanced in-demand skills to meet the needs of regional Pennsylvania engineering and advanced manufacturing employers.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because this proposal is requesting funds for industry-standard equipment in engineering, industrial mechatronics/robotics, and advanced manufacturing to better prepare Kutztown University students to meet regional,

state, and national workforce needs. Despite being a hub of technology innovation, Pennsylvania faces a shortage of skilled workers and gaps in critical areas such as robotics/mechatronics and industrial automation. The Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) and the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) have outlined needed credentials in advanced automation manufacturing and robotics. By investing in industry-aligned labs, hands-on training, and a career-oriented curriculum, KU can equip graduates with the technical skill, educational foundation, and certifications employers require. This funding would specifically support initiatives to establish capstone experiences, an automation and mechatronics lab, industrial robotics, and advanced manufacturing.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes described in section 272 of title 15, United States Code.

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Madeleine Dean". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress