

# SOLVING TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES TODAY.





**Paul Lavoie**  
**Chief Manufacturing Officer,**  
State of Connecticut

## A Letter from Connecticut's Chief Manufacturing Officer

I am pleased to share the 2025 update to Connecticut's Manufacturing Strategic Plan. This latest installment reflects our refined strategies and tactics for strengthening the state's manufacturing sector as we strive to drive both near-term improvements and long-term sustainability.

This strategy lays out a clear path toward the overarching goals we're committed to reaching by 2030:

1. Grow manufacturing from 10% to 20% of Connecticut's GDP.
2. Achieve full employment in the sector.

Over the past year, we have worked closely with industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders to assess current challenges, anticipate industry trends, and align our strategic priorities with our sector's greatest needs. The result is a focus on accelerating adoption, harnessing the network, and driving engagement to achieve four key objectives:

- Develop talent.
- Build sustainable companies.
- Drive innovation.
- Foster collaboration within and outside the sector.

We are excited about this plan's capacity to accelerate the growth of the manufacturing sector in Connecticut — building on our historic strengths while positioning us to capitalize on future opportunities. In fact, the systemic changes we're making today are already addressing tomorrow's challenges. No doubt there's much more we're eager to do. Yet our progress is tangible — and our path forward is energizing.

But the true success of this plan relies on our collective action. We invite you to join us in making this vision a reality. Together, we can ensure that Connecticut's manufacturing sector continues to fuel our state's economic growth — as well as to lead the nation's global competitiveness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Lavoie". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Paul Lavoie, Chief Manufacturing Officer  
State of Connecticut

# How Manufacturing Propels Connecticut's Economy Today

In Connecticut, manufacturing ranks as the state's second-largest industry sector — just behind finance and insurance. Across the nation, Connecticut ranks as the #1 most productive and geographically concentrated advanced manufacturing hub (*Lightcast, 2023*). Here are just a few of the ways manufacturing fuels our state's vital economy.



Source: [CBIA, 2024 Connecticut Manufacturing Report](#)

# How We're Accelerating Manufacturing's Growth for the Future



**Our strategy is focused on accomplishing two overarching goals by 2030:**

- Grow the sector so that it represents at least 20% of Connecticut GDP.
- Achieve full employment across our manufacturing sector.

Our plan for achieving these goals involves four key strategic components:

## Develop Talent

- Inspire the next generation to consider careers in manufacturing.
- Generate interest in those manufacturing careers from diverse groups.
- Upskill and reskill existing teams.

## Build Sustainable Companies

- Grow revenues by connecting manufacturers to opportunities.
- Reduce costs and minimize risks to boost resiliency.

## Drive Innovation

- Provide catalyst capital through matching grants.
- Build capacity by facilitating the adoption of key technologies.

## Improve Collaboration

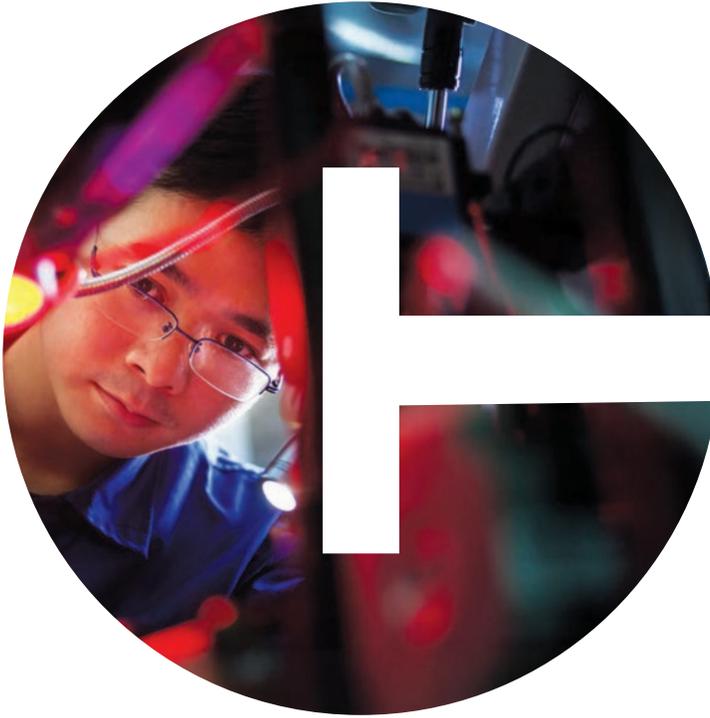
- Activate ambassadors to spread the positive perception of manufacturing.
- Communicate well and often, within the sector and beyond.

### Our 2025 Focus Areas

**Accelerate adoption**  
of innovation and  
supply chain programs

**Harness the network**  
to create a cohesive  
hub of solution providers

**Drive engagement**  
within the sector and expand  
awareness of resources



## STRATEGIC COMPONENT A:

# Develop Talent

Connecticut has long been known as home to one of the country's most skilled, productive manufacturing workforces. To sustain this position for decades to come, we need to create more pathways into manufacturing careers — for more types of workers.

### 1. Inspire our future workforce

To inspire the next generation to consider careers in manufacturing, we're focusing on increasing awareness of the opportunities, facilitating access to real-world learning, and aligning today's educational curricula with tomorrow's career options.

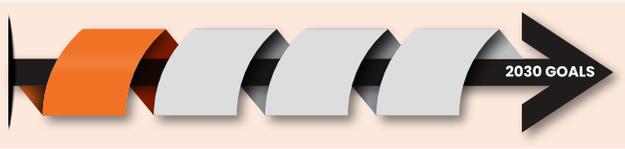
### 2. Generate interest among underserved groups

We're also finding innovative ways to encourage groups that have not traditionally considered a career in manufacturing to explore the possibilities and take the appropriate steps to prepare themselves for lifelong success.

### 3. Upskill existing teams

We continue to propel the advancement of today's current manufacturing workforce — by facilitating effective work-based training and reskilling programs.





## Programs designed to **DEVELOP TALENT**

### 1. INSPIRE OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE

#### Careers Roadshows

(administered by ReadyCT)

We're sponsoring events that introduce middle and high school students to manufacturing careers – all while strengthening relationships with industry and educational partners.

**“The Manufacturing Careers Roadshow provided us an invaluable pipeline to local high school and middle school students eager to explore the possibilities within STEM fields. We were able to show them the exciting possibilities within the world of manufacturing.”**

*Maddy Mangiafico, Marketing Specialist  
Reno Machine Company*

#### “I Got It Made” Campaign

To drive enrollment in higher ed manufacturing programs, we developed a “Hearts and Minds” paid-media campaign targeting high school students and their parents.

#### Manufacturing Career Lookbook

Our new “go-to-guide” is designed to inspire students to consider a career in manufacturing. It's packed with useful info on different jobs, salary potential, and training options.

In addition to distributing it to high school guidance counselors, we're finding more ways to optimize its distribution.



#### FIRST® (administered by ReadyCT)

FIRST offers a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages 4-18 (PreK-12). They learn to conduct research, fundraise, design, build, and showcase their achievements, preparing Connecticut participants for real-world careers.

**“This program has done so much to develop skills and confidence in our team members. Thank you for all you're doing to support FIRST competitions.”**

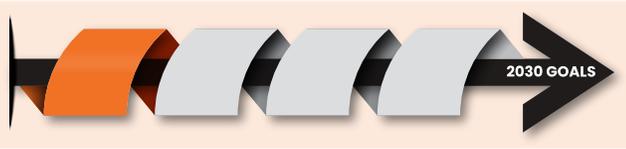
*Sangita Ray  
FIRST Mentor*

**“My favorite part was building the XRP robot with my teammates. I liked how it was a lot of hands-on learning, and not just the instructors telling us what to do.”**

*Philip Greenland  
East Hartford High School*

#### Connecticut FIRS Invention Convention

The Connecticut Office of Manufacturing is also helping to fund an award-winning educational program promoting invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship. This specific partnership will focus on bringing this program to Connecticut's Technical Education and Career System by providing mentors and curriculum expertise.



## Programs designed to **DEVELOP TALENT**

### 1. INSPIRE OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE (CONT.)

#### **Internship Program Support**

(administered by CCAT)

We're helping to expand the number of manufacturing internship opportunities – by making wage subsidies available for manufacturing companies with 300 employees or less so they can hire up to four interns each summer.

#### **Faculty Fellow Program**

(administered by CCAT)

This program funds training for Connecticut college professors on Industry 4.0 technologies. By updating our educators' skills, we're ensuring they can expose their students to cutting-edge, industry-ready technologies and processes.

#### **Educator Meetings**

Key to developing the next generation of talent is continually realigning our educational curricula with our industry needs. So we host regular meetings with state college deans, high school

superintendents, and representatives from the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS).

#### **Pathways to STEM Nights**

(administered by CCAT)

To inspire interest in manufacturing careers, we also spotlight young manufacturing role models. Through events at museums across the state, we connect parents and students with these successful young people already making their mark on CT manufacturing.



### 2. GENERATE INTEREST AMONG UNDERSERVED GROUPS

#### **Manufacturing Shake-Up**

(administered by ElevateHER)

We launched a podcast to provide motivational, tailored content “for women by women” who are actively considering or pursuing careers in manufacturing.

#### **ElevateHER Women Advisory Board**

To advise the Chief Manufacturing Officer on current issues and challenges facing women in manufacturing, we've created an advisory council of women in manufacturing.

#### **Vocational Villages Program**

(working with OWS DEIA committee)

We're partnering with the Office of Workforce Strategy DEIA committee to provide skilled trades training to inmates. This program's support helps inmates transition back into the workforce.

#### **Million Women Mentors**

(administered by Southern CT State University)

We funded access to a database that matches mentors with mentees, offering women in STEM unparalleled access to robust support networks and cultivating an opportunity-rich environment.



## Programs designed to **DEVELOP TALENT**

### 2. GENERATE INTEREST AMONG UNDERSERVED GROUPS (CONT.)



#### **Make It Here 2030**

We've created a statewide plan to achieve full employment in the manufacturing sector by 2030, including a definitive guide to all of the workforce programs in the sector.

#### **Connect Veterans to Opportunity**

Our joint effort with the Office of Workforce Strategy DEIA committee helps to attract more veterans into the manufacturing career system.

#### **Neurodiverse Hiring Initiatives** (administered by CCARC)

We're working with CCARC to bring more neurodiverse individuals into the manufacturing sector through more inclusive hiring practices, accessible work accommodations, and collaboration with advocacy groups.



### 3. UPSKILL AND RESKILL WORKERS

#### **Apprenticeship Funding Program** (administered by CCAT)

We're supporting the development of a new apprenticeship model with wage reimbursements. It focuses on the needs of employers in key areas of growth – like mechatronics, robotics, and digital transformation.

**“This was a fantastic program. I hope it encourages more companies to hire more apprentices, as they really are our future.”**

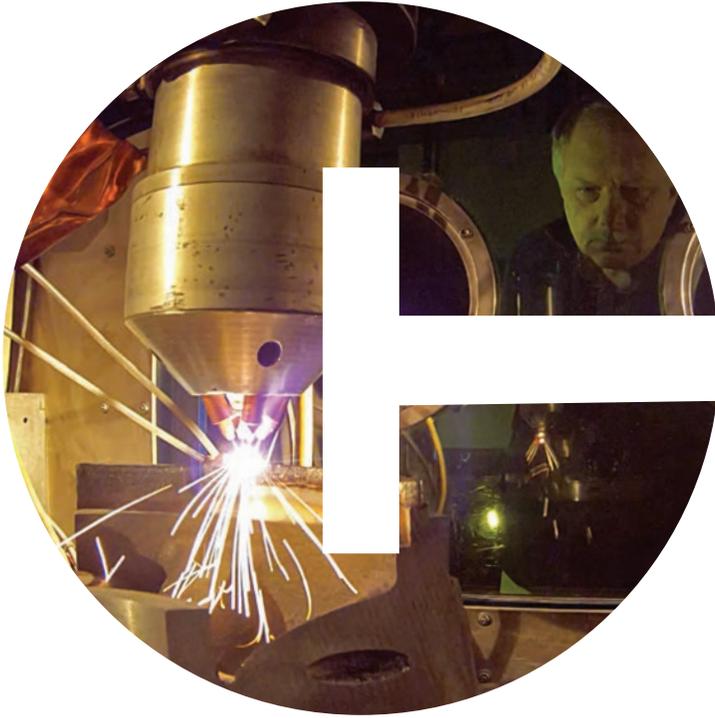
*Cathie Pragano, HR Manager  
Stewart EFI*

#### **Incumbent Worker Training** (administered by CCAT)

This matching grant program helps to defray the costs of training and reskilling employees as well as integrating new, advanced technologies into lean manufacturing processes.

**“Thank you for these training funds. The program has helped our ever growing team so much!”**

*Jen Ryan, Human HR Manager  
Twenty2, LLC*



## STRATEGIC COMPONENT B:

# Build Sustainable Companies

Many of Connecticut's manufacturers have been in operation for generations. We're also welcoming many new entrants into our sector. Whatever their history, to sustain momentum, every manufacturer needs to focus on both maximizing opportunities and minimizing risks. Here's how we're helping them do just that.

### 1. Facilitate business development

One of the most powerful ways the Office of Manufacturing can help enhance resiliency and expedite the growth of our manufacturers is to connect them to opportunities. We're facilitating those connections by fostering industry networking, providing access to research, and funding key programs.

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### 2. Reduce costs and minimize risks

We're also focused on helping our manufacturing companies optimize their efficiency by supporting programs that help them manage risk, improve business processes, and reduce their energy use.





## Programs designed to build **SUSTAINABLE COMPANIES**

### 1. FACILITATE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

#### **FORGE Innovation Ecosystem**

(administered by FORGE)

This program provides vouchers to connect startups with our statewide ecosystem of manufacturers, design firms, and engineers. This ensures our startups have access to the professional assistance they need to succeed.

**“The support from the FORGE program has been invaluable to our growth. Their assistance led to a grant award, providing crucial funding. And they have gone above and beyond providing us with supply chain referrals that have strengthened our network and streamlined our processes.”**

*Dr. Jinqiang Ning, CEO & Founder  
Evident Battery*

#### **Cybersecurity Gap Assessments**

(administered by CCAT)

We subsidize tools that help manufacturers understand their cyber risks, develop resiliency plans, and achieve Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC).

#### **CONNEX Supply Chain Database**

(administered by CONNSTEP)

This initiative provides state-level access to a comprehensive database connecting all Connecticut suppliers to OEMs. It serves as a marketplace for RFIs and RFQs to expand business opportunities and encourage Connecticut-shoring and near-shoring.

**“Since joining ConnexCT, we’ve secured new business opportunities worth nearly \$50,000 a year. This is an invaluable platform for expanding our reach and raising our company’s visibility.”**

*Ralph Prisco, Owner  
U.T.R. Engineering Works*



#### **Manufacturing Concierge**

We’ve developed, and continue to implement, a Manufacturing Concierge program to connect manufacturers to the resources they need to grow their business and enhance their resiliency.

#### **Aerospace and Defense Conference**

(administered by the ACM)

We sponsor this industry-focused B2B supplier summit that introduces vetted companies across the globe through pre-arranged meetings with RTX and other Connecticut suppliers.

#### **Dedicated Supplier Events**

We also sponsor customized supplier events that connect large corporate buyers with Connecticut manufacturing, engineering, procurement, and product development teams. Recent events with NASA and Airbus were a huge success!



## Programs designed to build **SUSTAINABLE COMPANIES**

### 1. FACILITATE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

#### **Community Resiliency Grant**

(federal OLDCC grant)

We're conducting a pilot to identify repeatable methods to bolster connection among large defense manufacturers, municipalities, and stakeholders in Eastern Connecticut communities.



### 2. REDUCE COSTS/MINIMIZE RISKS

#### **GreenGAIN**

(administered by the Connecticut Sustainable Business Council)

This program provides access to training, subject matter expertise, and financial resources to help small manufacturing companies merge energy efficiency with economic gains.



#### **Offshore Wind Supply Chain Study**

(administered by the Connecticut Wind Collaborative)

Through this study, we're identifying growth opportunities for the offshore wind industry and the supply chain.

#### **SMART Energy Grant**

(funded by Federal U.S. Department of Energy Grant)

We're leveraging a \$2.5M Department of Energy state leadership grant to reduce CO2 emissions and improve energy efficiency in Connecticut's industrial base.

#### **Exiger Tool**

(administered by CONNSTEP)

Within the CONNEX Marketplace database, this AI-powered tool provides end-to-end visibility across the supply chain, allowing Connecticut service providers to develop risk mitigation programming to strengthen manufacturers and the statewide supply chain.

**“Using CONNEX, we made a great strategic match with a local company that will generate about \$100K in annual sales for us. They were previously purchasing this product out of state, and we were able to provide them with a complete solution.”**

*William Hazard, President  
NOVO Precision*



## STRATEGIC COMPONENT C:

# Drive Innovation

Innovation is the engine that will continue to accelerate the growth of our manufacturers and the advancement of our sector. So we're committed to making it easier for manufacturers to learn about, invest in, and incorporate innovative technologies and automated processes across their operations.

### 1. Provide catalyst capital

Through our highly utilized matching grant programs, we're helping to stimulate growth, promote technology adoption, and operationalize innovation.

### 2. Build capacity

We're also focused on helping our manufacturing companies optimize their efficiency by supporting programs that help them manage risk, improve business processes, and reduce their energy consumption.





## Programs designed to help **DRIVE INNOVATION**

### 1. PROVIDE CATALYST CAPITAL

#### **Manufacturing Voucher Program (MVP)**

(administered by CCAT)

This highly utilized program provides matching grants for eligible manufacturers under 100 employees to purchase equipment and update their processes so they can incorporate Industry 4.0 advancements into their operations.

**“The MVP Program has been awesome. It pushed us to move forward and massively upgrade our equipment. Thanks to these newer machines, we are booming and new work is coming in every day.”**

*Phillip Biron, President  
AOT Mfg, LLC*



#### **Additive Technology Adoption Program for Manufacturing**

(administered by CCAT)

This program helps manufacturers evaluate, purchase, install, and integrate state-of-the-art additive manufacturing technologies into their production processes. Not only do these technologies speed production, they can lower the cost of building complex parts.

**“This project has been really beneficial to our company. It wouldn’t have happened without your support.”**

*Chuck Bankik, VP of Operations  
Quality Engineering Services, Inc. (QES)*

**“The Additive Voucher program helped us prove the cost savings and efficiency improvements of integrating a 3D printer in our day-to-day operations. We’ve already seen significant cost savings since its installation.”**

*Jennifer Doughty, Office Manager  
EBL Products, Inc.*

#### **Digital Transformation Program**

(administered by CCAT)

This program provides training and access to matching grants to support the adoption and integration of Industry 4.0 technologies by funding digital hardware, software, sensors, and related third-party integration services.



## Programs designed to help **DRIVE INNOVATION**

## 2. BUILD CAPACITY

### **Scaling Model-Based Definition**

(federal Office of Local Defense Community  
Cooperation Grant)

We're driving process innovation by supporting the adoption and transition to Model-Based Definition (MBD) technologies that improve quality, reduce costs, and increase efficiency.

### **Manufacturing Roundtables at UConn Tech Park**

(in partnership with UCONN)

Through these roundtable discussions, we're connecting industry and education leaders (K-12, higher education, and alternative training organizations) to strengthen relationships and facilitate growth.

### **Model-Based Enterprise Tech Hub**

(federal EDA grant)

We have been awarded a U.S. Department of Commerce planning grant with a focus on the Model-Based Enterprise within three manufacturing sectors: clean energy, commercial aerospace, and medical devices. This work leverages prior Model-Based Definition work undertaken by the Office of Manufacturing within Connecticut's defense manufacturing ecosystem.





## STRATEGIC COMPONENT D:

# Improve Collaboration

Strengthening and growing Connecticut's manufacturing sector requires the coordinated effort between and within various organizations across the state. Toward that end, the Connecticut Office of Manufacturing supports a number of initiatives designed to align and enhance our collective efforts.

### 1. Facilitate networking

We're taking an active role in listening to the many voices across our manufacturing sector – and in bringing them together to support and learn from each other.

### 2. Enhance communication

We continue to focus on raising awareness of the importance of manufacturing to the Connecticut economy through more regular, effective communication programs.





## Programs designed to help **IMPROVE COLLABORATION**

### 1. FACILITATE NETWORKING

#### Manufacturing Cabinet

We've established a cross-functional group of stakeholders from private and public entities to drive collaboration, communication, and coordination within the sector.

#### L4 Tour Visits

We continue to regularly visit manufacturing companies across the state to facilitate better communication, strengthen relationships, and build trust. These visits ensure we remain "in touch" with the day-to-day realities of the industry.



#### Manufacturing Day Event (administered by CCAT)

We host an annual networking event for manufacturers, educators, students, and other industry leaders — featuring inspiring technology showcases and panel discussions.

### 2. ENHANCE COMMUNICATION

#### Salesforce Implementation

We're implementing a customer relationship management (CRM) platform to improve communication through increased personalization, flexibility, and efficiency gains.

#### Media Relations/Social Media

We sustain a regular cadence of media engagements to expand reach, keep manufacturing part of the broader public conversation, and circulate new and notable information updates.

We also regularly post on social media to increase awareness and engagement — including our "Monday Minute" and "Fastest 3 Minutes in Manufacturing Fridays" posts.

#### The BluePrint (monthly newsletter)

We produce a monthly newsletter featuring manufacturing updates from across the state and distribute to our manufacturing ambassadors.

#### Manufacturing Ambassadors

We're continuing to grow and activate our ambassador program, designed to leverage the many existing advocates for CT Manufacturing to help spread the positive, accurate information about all of the exciting developments in the manufacturing sector.

#### Help us spread the word!

Apply to be a  
CT Manufacturing  
Ambassador at  
[mfgambassador.com](http://mfgambassador.com)



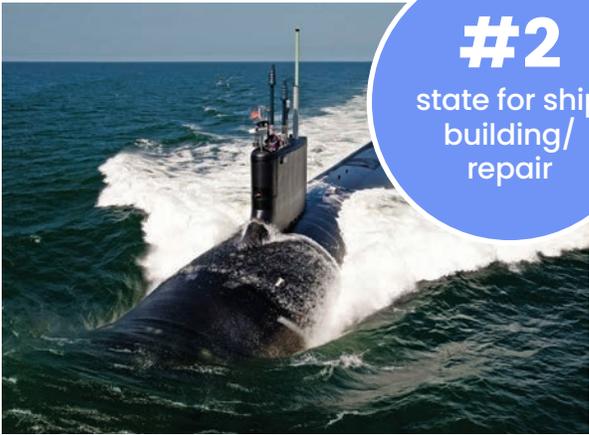
STRATEGIES IN ACTION:

# The State of Connecticut Manufacturing

Our strategies are already working to keep CT manufacturing on top. Here are just a few examples.



**#1**  
in manufacturing  
for aircraft  
engines



**#2**  
state for ship  
building/  
repair



**#3**  
state for defense  
spending per  
capita



**#4**  
for employee  
productivity



**4,116**  
companies  
aided by  
the MIF

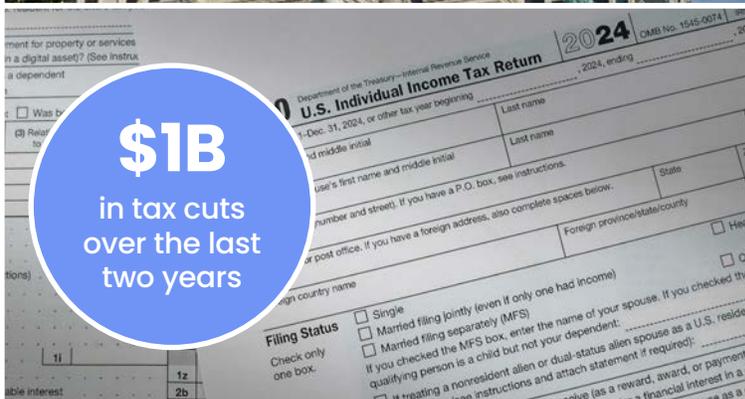
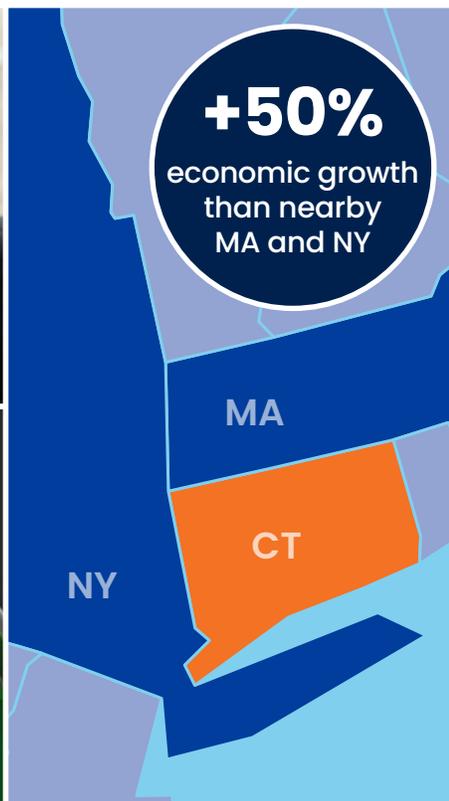


**13%**  
contribution  
to state's GDP

STRATEGIES IN ACTION:

# The State of Connecticut's Economy

Given manufacturing's contribution to our state's GDP, it is also helping to fuel Connecticut's overall financial strength.



For more information on Connecticut's Manufacturing Strategic Plan, contact Connecticut's Chief Manufacturing Officer, Paul Lavoie at [paul.lavoie@ct.gov](mailto:paul.lavoie@ct.gov).



**CONNECTICUT**  
Manufacturing