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MIT President Reif picked by Obama to co-chair committee trying to boost US manufacturing

Posted by Matt Rocheleau September 27, 2013 11:55 AM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

MIT President L. Rafael Reif was picked by President Barack Obama this week to co-lead a committee that aims to try to find ways to boost manufacturing in the United States.

Reif will chair the “Advanced Manufacturing Partnership Steering Committee 2.0” alongside Andrew Liveris, president, chairman and CEO of the Dow Chemical Company, White House officials announced Thursday.

Obama named 17 others to the committee – a mix of leaders in industry, academia and labor, who will be “part of a continuing effort to maintain U.S. leadership in the emerging technologies that will create high-quality manufacturing jobs and enhance America’s global competitiveness,” the White House said in a statement.

The group will aim take over the work started by the inaugural steering committee for the [Advanced Manufacturing Partnership](#), which Obama created in 2011 “with the recognition that industry, academia, and government must work in partnership to revitalize our manufacturing sector,” the statement said.

“AMP 2.0 is a vital step in securing the future of America’s innovation economy,” Reif said in a statement. “I am grateful to President Obama for entrusting me with the responsibility to co-chair its steering committee. It will be my great honor to represent the MIT community in this important effort.”

The first steering committee, which was co-chaired by Liveris and former MIT President Susan Hockfield, [released a report](#) last year calling for “a national effort to strengthen the U.S. advanced manufacturing sector,” the White House statement said.

“Most importantly, the inaugural steering committee called for sustaining U.S. investments in science, technology, and innovation; establishing a National Network of Manufacturing Innovation Institutes – a set of public-private partnerships to build shared high-tech facilities and advance U.S. leadership in emerging technologies; upgrading community-college workforce training programs and deploying the talent of returning veterans to meet critical manufacturing skills needs; and improving the business climate for manufacturing investment through tax, regulatory, energy, and trade reform,” the statement continued.

White House officials said some of those proposals are already underway.

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The new steering committee will function “as a working group” of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and will work closely with the White House’s National Economic Council and Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Department of Commerce.

The group will work to implement the recommendations of their predecessors on the committee, develop new strategies and identify opportunities for innovation, taking advantage of “transformative” technology and partnerships.

The committee will also hold working sessions and forums with members of the country’s manufacturing community to surface examples of innovative strategies to build US manufacturing competitiveness, the White House said.

They will “continue to make America a magnet for jobs and manufacturing so we continue to manufacture things the rest of the world buys,” the White House said.

The 17 other committee members named by Obama Thursday are:

- Wes Bush, Chairman, CEO and President, Northrop Grumman Corp.
- Mary Sue Coleman President, The University of Michigan
- David Cote, Chairman and CEO, Honeywell
- Nicholas Dirks, Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley
- Kenneth Ender, President, Harper College
- Leo Gerard, International President, United Steelworkers
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Matt Rocheleau can be reached at mjrochele@gmail.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).

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