

**Congressional Steel Caucus Hearing**  
**Transcription of Remarks by Congressman Conor Lamb**  
**March 5, 2020**

Thank you all for being here today I am going to call the hearing to order, so to speak. I am Conor Lamb from Pennsylvania's 17<sup>th</sup> district and with me here are a number of members who represent steel-producing regions of this country. I appreciate everybody taking some time to be with us this morning.

Really the reason that I understand we do this hearing every year—and this is my second one—is that I don't think enough people in Washington D.C. really appreciate the vital role that your industry and your companies still play, in not only in American life but in the world. Somebody gave me a book not too long ago that was called *Still the Age of Iron and Steel* making the point that iron and steel still dominate the world economy today. And whether you're talking about daily transportation and infrastructure and the construction boom that's happening in Western Pennsylvania: all dependent on the availability of steel. Or for anyone who has served with or interacted with the United States military, everything we ride in, shoot, control, has some component of steel and other metals. And it really speaks to our strength as a country—our ability to maintain this vital industry.

For those of us from Western Pennsylvania, we also look back and think about how the height of the steel industry in our part of the country really was also probably the strongest time for the middle class that we've had. And somebody broke this down not too long ago to say what were \$30/hour steel jobs in the '60s and '70s really became \$15/hour and less healthcare jobs in the '90s and 2000s. And there's a lot of reasons for that but I think at the most basic was that we produced a lot of steel, used a little bit of it ourselves and sold it to the rest of the world and now we produce a lot of healthcare, use most of it ourselves, and sell only a little bit to the rest of the world and that's a very different value proposition.

I think as a region in Western Pennsylvania, but also as a country, we need to think a lot harder about our industrial policy and the way that the actions of this government are effecting companies like yours and especially their workers and whether we're creating enough opportunities for the modern equivalence of those \$30/hour jobs. I was able to speak with a few of you before this morning about coronavirus and the light that that may be shining on our connections to China and supply chain issues that we're going to have and it may serve as a reminder to the American people why it is that you go out of your way to maintain an essential industry like yours for hard times like this. And that may be something that we are able to build on going forward.

Looking forward to hearing from all of you today about how the last year has been, what we can do to make things better, and I also just want to acknowledge that we know many of you are making some serious investments in R&D and ways to become even leaner and more efficient going forward, ways to emit less carbon in your production processes or offset it, so hoping to hear from you about those things today because we know that's very important. I'm sure we'll talk about infrastructure, both as an economic development tool but also a way to help drive demand. Again, maybe the latest threats and slow down are something that can drive both sides together on that issue down here in Washington. We are certainly hoping for that.

Again, want to thank all of our witnesses. I want to also thank our Chairman Emeritus Pete Visclosky for his important work on this caucus here and in Congress. He's made a lasting impact. I want to recognize our Vice Chairman, Representative Mike Boss from the great state of Illinois, and Representative Rick

Crawford from Arkansas. We're going to go through some introductions of the witnesses. After we introduce each person, we're going to allow them to present their testimony and I think that is how we are going to proceed.

Apparently, I have to recognize my vice chairmen for their opening statements as well and I'm sure they have much to say so we'll start with Mr. Boss from Illinois.