

NEW YORK  
STATE  
SENATE



SENATOR RICHARD M. FUNKE  
55<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing today to implore you to provide \$200 million in funding for the Rochester region's Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute. As you know, there is currently a federal competition being run by the Department of Defense who are committing \$110 million to the winning project. By committing state dollars to create this institute, we will show the federal government our commitment to being a world-class institute regardless of their decision.

The Rochester region is home to photonics and optics giants like Kodak, Xerox, Bausch and Lomb and Corning. These businesses along with strong ties between University of Rochester's Laboratory for Laser Energetics and RIT's advanced research, and a workforce highly trained in advanced manufacturing already provide an environment that promotes research, development and commercialization. This institute belongs in Rochester; it would be transformative and important to the region.

Recent reports show that the city of Rochester is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> poorest in the nation, though the majority (59%) of the regions poor live outside the city. Unemployment in Monroe county is 9.8% and those in the city of Rochester living in Poverty is 33%. This region doesn't just need jobs, it needs good, high paying jobs and training for its workforce. By locating the Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute in Rochester, it can promote and stimulate economic development, innovation and transform the economy of a struggling city. This would create new opportunities for education, jobs and collaboration between local and international businesses and educational institutions.

I believe that an upfront monetary commitment to this institute is important in leveraging what the Rochester area already has to offer in order to secure federal approval and funding. This will revitalize the economy in Monroe county and allow the great citizens of New York the opportunity not only to make a difference locally, but nationally and globally.

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I hope you will take this request under consideration and make a public commitment to the Rochester area by pledging \$200 million in state funds to create the Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute whether or not they win the federal competition. Please feel free to contact me for any further information you may need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rich Funke".

Rich Funke  
55<sup>th</sup> Senate District

CC: Senator Dean Skelos Leader of the Senate