



SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT

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For more information:
Av Harris: (860) 509-6255
Cell: (860) 463-5939

-STATEMENT-

BYSIEWICZ CONDEMNS PRATT & WHITNEY DECISION TO CLOSE CHESHIRE, EAST HARTFORD FACILITIES

SECRETARY OF THE STATE STRONGLY OPPOSES PLAN TO CLOSE PROFITABLE
JET ENGINE REPAIR FACILITIES, VOWS A FIGHT TO SAVE JOBS

HARTFORD: Connecticut Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today issued this statement reacting to the decision by management at Pratt & Whitney to shut down jet engine repair facilities in Cheshire and East Hartford and eliminate more than 1,000 jobs.

“This is a sad day for the Connecticut economy and for all the families in our state who have poured years of experience into manufacturing and repairing the finest jet engines in the world. Pratt & Whitney’s decision to close the repair and maintenance facilities in Cheshire and East Hartford will cost Connecticut not only the 1,000 positions who work directly at these plants, but an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 jobs will be lost among the small manufacturers and suppliers who provide many of the components used to work on these engines. This is the wrong direction for our economy to be taking. This decision is bad for Connecticut’s working families, and it is also a bad business decision for Pratt & Whitney, whose leadership seems to be more focused on increasing profits than maintaining and expanding its highly skilled, highly trained and experienced workforce to produce the best quality jet engines for its public and private clients. This shortsighted plan deals a blow to Connecticut’s manufacturing base and the defense sector, and could put our military and civilian air travelers at risk by shifting the production of essential national security components overseas. The Machinists union and the State of Connecticut both offered Pratt & Whitney serious concessions and incentives to keep the facilities in Cheshire and East Hartford open, but management at United Technologies Corp. seemed to have their minds made up from the beginning that these profitable facilities were going to close. One thing is clear: we will not give up without a fight. I personally pledge to do everything I can to work with state officials and the International Association of Machinists to keep these jobs in Connecticut and prevent these plant closures from taking place one year from now.”