



WASHINGTON UPDATE

from SENATOR CARL LEVIN



levin.senate.gov

December 2011

Recently, Sen. Levin led Senate passage of legislation that relies on Michigan industry to help defend the nation; led an investigation into counterfeit electronic parts in the Defense Department supply system; chaired an oversight hearing on how excessive speculation in commodities markets costs consumers and businesses; repeated his call for balanced deficit reduction; and secured passage of legislation to aid a Michigan light rail project and preservation of Northern Michigan wilderness.

If you would prefer not to receive future newsletters, [click here](#) »

If you would like to contact Sen. Levin, [click here](#) »

Defense bill builds on Michigan manufacturing, innovation



As chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sen. Levin led the way to Senate passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, which establishes policies and programs in the Department of Defense. The bill includes more than \$170 million for research and development programs at the Army's Tank and Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center in Warren, and

funding for procurement of vehicles, ships and weapons systems that rely on Michigan manufacturers.

[Read about Michigan's role in the annual defense bill](#) »

Counterfeit parts endanger troops, security



An investigation by the Senate Armed Services Committee, which Sen. Levin chairs, found nearly 2,000 examples of counterfeit electronic parts in the military supply chain. Most of those parts appear to come from China, where a brazenly open market in counterfeit parts thrives. In a hearing on the investigation, Sen. Levin questioned executives from defense contractors whose systems were found to contain counterfeit parts, called for contractors and the Pentagon to tighten prevention measures, and called on China to end the counterfeit parts trade there. "If China will not act promptly, then we should treat all electronic parts from China as suspected counterfeits," he said.

[Read Sen. Levin's opening statement from the Armed Services Committee hearing »](#)

[Read a background memo on the investigation »](#)

[Read Sen. Levin's newspaper column on the investigation »](#)

[Read about the bipartisan amendment to combat counterfeit parts »](#)

Speculators cost consumers, economy



Excessive speculation in commodities markets for food, fuel and other materials raises prices for consumers and hurts the ability of businesses to grow and create jobs. Wall Street reform legislation put new curbs on speculators, but the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which regulates commodity markets, must turn that legislation into detailed rules and enforce them. In a hearing of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which he chairs, Sen. Levin called on the CFTC to enforce those curbs.

[Read Sen. Levin's opening statement »](#)

[Read a press release on the hearing »](#)

[Read Sen. Levin's newspaper column on commodity speculation »](#)

More News from Senator Levin

- Sen. Levin called for a **compromise on balanced deficit reduction** in the wake of the failure of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction.
- He urged President Obama to **oppose Japan's participation in key free-trade talks** unless Japan's government opens its notoriously closed domestic auto market to U.S.-

made vehicles.

- He praised final passage of his legislation to help clear the way for the **Woodward Avenue light rail** project.
- He cosponsored legislation to restore the **ability of states to protect consumers** from improperly high credit card rates.
- At a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Iraq, he **praised the decision to withdraw U.S. troops by the end of the year** as "the right decision."
- Sen. Levin honored the life of businessman and philanthropist **Frederik Meijer**.
- He hailed committee approval of legislation to **preserve more than 30,000 acres of wilderness** at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.
- He announced **four grants to help Michigan communities** plan for sustainable housing and transportation development.
- He supported legislation to **create jobs and help returning veterans** find rewarding employment.
- He **opposed legislation that could have harmed air quality** in Michigan.
- He chaired a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on **four key Defense Department nominations**.
- He chaired a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on **proposals to add the chief of the National Guard Bureau** to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- He **opposed legislation** that threatened the openness and availability of the Internet.