



Businesses concerned about halting military vehicle production

By: James Crummel – July 11, 2013

The government is set to shutdown production of a military vehicle, which could mean the loss of many midstate jobs. Other local businesses say they would feel the pinch too, and want to do something about it.

BAE Systems in York County is one of only two companies in the country that makes the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. They've been building it for the military since the 80's. But starting next year, that could come to an end.

The Army plans to stop production of the Bradley for three years. BAE says if that happens, it would have to layoff 250 people. Its suppliers would have to cut back too. Many of them are small local businesses that depend on the work it gets from BAE.

They came together at a press conference this morning to show their support.

BAE says stopping production of the Bradley would be a mistake because they would be losing skilled workers, which would ultimately cost taxpayers in the long run.

"If we shutdown and lose those skills, and there is a crisis in the world and we're asked to respond," said Mel Nace of BAE, "You can't bring a welder in that worked over at Harley Davidson or somewhere else because to train an army capable welder takes six months to two years."

However, Tad DeHaven, with the Libertarian think tank Cato Institute, disagrees.

"You don't just build something with taxpayer dollars just because you say you need to build it just because there might be a threat down the road," he said.

Local lawmakers are showing their support for the businesses.

Representatives were there from both Senator Pat Toomey's and Congressman Scott Perry's office. We also spoke with Senator Bob Casey who says he doesn't support cuts that destroy jobs.