



*The Optronics International staff with Rep. Markwayne Mullin (center) at their Muskogee, Okla. facility in August 2019.*

## Optronics International Hosts Rep. Mullin (OK-2)

*By Nancy Eaton, Director of Marketing,  
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Lighting manufacturer Optronics International hosted a facility tour and listening session with Congressman Markwayne Mullin (OK-2) at its Muskogee, Okla. distribution and service center in early August. As part of the company's ongoing efforts to increase its government affairs outreach and education on behalf of the light- and medium-duty trailer industry as a supplier member of NATM, Optronics International regularly invites legislators to tour their facility and meet with their team. The company also sends its leadership to the annual NATM Regulatory Roundup and Capitol Hill Visits to raise awareness of the concerns affecting the industry.

Rep. Mullin visited Optronics International in early August, touring the facility with Optronics CEO Brett Johnson and Marcus Hester, vice president of sales and marketing. Johnson

and Hester enjoyed the opportunity to showcase the 47-year-old Oklahoma company and its exceptional people, and also draw attention to NATM and its mission to improve the safety of the industry.

Congressman Mullin was elected to serve the second congressional district of Oklahoma in 2012 and is in his fourth term in office. Mullin currently serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, whose broad jurisdiction includes manufacturing, commerce, energy and environmental policy, and health care. Mullin has been a strong voice for business owners and has previously visited the Optronics facility.

The official visit began with introductions to the Optronics staff, which included the company's management team as well as

members of the operations, manufacturing, customer service, shipping, receiving, quality control, and marketing departments. As the tour proceeded, Rep. Mullin voiced concern for his constituents, inquiring about employee wages, work environment, and average tenure.

A highlight of the tour was a demonstration of the company's photometric test lab, housed in a pitch dark "tunnel." One of six photometric test tunnels utilized company-wide, the Muskogee lab is used regularly to test lighting for customer-specific applications, ensuring Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 108 compliance of lamps as they would be installed on trailers. Optronics stringently follows test processes designed by SAE International and adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to ensure compliance.

Rep. Mullin observed the photometric test with interest, watching the light automatically rotate on the equipment so light output could be measured at NHTSA-prescribed angles. The movements may seem random, but each angle represents the visibility of the trailer by a vehicle traveling down the road in its vicinity – following behind, passing, merging, etc. – confirming the trailer's presence will be recognized from all positions. The brief demonstration showcased the investment made by Optronics to ensure safety and visibility and exemplified the dedication of the industry overall.

"Rep. Mullin expressed interest in NHTSA, and how they affect us. We explained that FMVSS 108 vehicle safety lighting is self-governing, and that lighting manufacturers are solely responsible for federal compliance," stated Brett Johnson, president and chief executive officer. NHTSA periodically tests lighting and other trailer components at independent, certified test labs. Optronics uses the same independent labs to confirm that new products meet current regulations, providing its customers with documentation, and reassurance.

"NATM requires compliance verification as a tenet for regular [trailer manufacturer] membership," said Marcus Hester. "Its mission is to improve trailer safety and performance and to further the industry. Optronics supports that effort by providing compliance documentation to NATM members."

NATM's Government Affairs program actively works to reach out to legislators on behalf of its membership. But, to successfully advocate for the industry, member companies must contact the Association and alert them of potential challenges. With NATM member companies ranging from small shops to million-dollar companies, running a business is already a full-time job without the added responsibility of working with legislators.

The Association will continue to work on behalf of member companies to identify the possible impacts of legislation. Through plant visits, legislative round tables, and its annual Regulatory Roundup and Capitol Hill Visits in Washington, D.C., NATM will continue to improve the communication between the light- and medium-duty trailer industry and lawmakers.

For more information about Optronics International, visit [www.optronicsinc.com](http://www.optronicsinc.com) or call (918) 286-1288. For more information about hosting your representatives or becoming more involved in NATM's Government Affairs programs, contact NATM Assistant Director Meghan Ryan at [Meghan.Ryan@natm.com](mailto:Meghan.Ryan@natm.com) or call (785) 272-4433. ■



*Optronics International CEO Brett Johnson (left) with Rep. Mullin (right).*