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Investing in the Future of Michigan's Automotive Workforce to Advance America's Energy Dominance

Clean Fuels Michigan appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the National Science Foundation's Request for Information regarding workforce training and innovation to advance America's energy dominance. We are a nonprofit trade association supporting businesses across Michigan's advanced mobility sector, and we work closely with industry, workforce organizations, and policymakers to support the growth of next-generation transportation technologies and the skilled workforce required to deploy them at scale.

1.a - Advanced mobility technologies represent a critical and rapidly growing segment of America's manufacturing and energy economies. Vehicles powered by domestically produced fuels, such as biofuels, propane, hydrogen, and electricity, strengthen US energy independence by reducing exposure to volatile imported fuel markets. Domestic fuels also align with national priorities to expand advanced manufacturing capacity. Supporting a automotive workforce that is prepared for these technology shifts is a matter of economic competitiveness and industrial leadership.

Michigan is uniquely positioned at the center of this opportunity. With a deep history of innovation and automotive legacy, Michigan houses employers across the sector, including OEMs, suppliers, logistics providers, and training institutions. In fact, [Michigan is home to the highest concentration of engineers nationwide](#). Our automotive ecosystem is rapidly evolving to support new vehicle technologies enabled by innovations in, batteries, electronics, software, and associated infrastructure. Ensuring that Michigan's workforce system keeps pace with this transformation is essential to maintaining US competitiveness in the global automotive market.

Immediate needs in automotive workforce training span the entire ecosystem, including vehicle and component manufacturing, battery production, raw materials processing, logistics and supply chain, software development, and the deployment, operation, and maintenance of these new technologies. Demand for skilled workers across these areas is rapidly growing, and workforce shortages or training gaps risk becoming limiting factors on domestic manufacturing if not addressed proactively.

1.b - As a trade association, Clean Fuels Michigan serves as a convener and facilitator, helping align industry needs with education and workforce systems. We work to elevate best practices, facilitate collaboration, share information, and inform policy discussions that support workforce readiness. Our industry members are already directly involved with supporting an automotive workforce that is prepared for the next generation of vehicle technologies by producing and delivering curriculum, training equipment, and actual training sessions for new and incumbent workers.

Strong industry partnerships with educational institutions are essential to ensuring that training programs remain relevant as technologies evolve. The NSF's emphasis on regional ecosystems that connect industry, education, nonprofits, and government aligns well with the needs of the automotive workforce and Michigan's existing collaborative landscape.

1.c - Michigan benefits from a strong existing educational infrastructure to support our automotive industry that can be easily adapted to support current and future needs. At the K-12 level, early STEM and CTE programs that introduce students to electrical systems, manufacturing processes, and mobility technologies provide foundational skills and interest in a broad range of high-tech careers. Community colleges, trade and technical schools, and universities across Michigan are already updating their curricula to reflect industry needs, providing students with access to programs like high-voltage safety training, battery engineering, and new certifications.

At the same time, incumbent workers throughout the automotive industry are actively reskilling and upskilling to transition into new roles as the industry shifts. Continued investment is needed to ensure these institutions have the equipment, faculty development, and industry alignment necessary to deliver effective, hands-on training. Rather than creating entirely new workforce systems, federal investments can build on Michigan's existing strengths by supporting the modernization and coordination of proven pipelines across education and workforce institutions. This approach enables faster deployment, stronger industry alignment, and more durable workforce outcomes.

2. Focusing on supporting our domestic automotive workforce readiness is critical. The automotive industry is seeing rapid innovations in new vehicle technologies like cutting-edge software and autonomy that is enabled by electrification, and our domestic manufacturers are trying to keep pace. US automakers are global companies competing in international markets where electric vehicle adoption is accelerating rapidly. Foreign manufacturers, particularly in China, have made significant gains in the global automotive market share, driven by their dominance in the EV sector. If Michigan's workforce is not prepared for the automotive market of the future, the state's leadership role, and by extension, the nation's competitive position, will be at risk.

By contrast, strategic investment in automotive workforce development will help ensure that advanced vehicle technologies continue to be designed, built, and developed by American workers. This strengthens domestic supply chains, supports high-quality manufacturing jobs, and reinforces the United States' position as the global leader in automotive technology.