

A Statement of Support Regarding Federal Assistance to the Auto Industry

As the leaders of Michigan's three major research universities, we know firsthand the impact of the automotive industry on so many facets of the economy here in the Midwest, especially in the Great Lakes region. A recent study by the Center for Automotive Research—born at the University of Michigan and still located in Ann Arbor—estimates that 3 million jobs across a wide swath of states and business networks would be lost should Chrysler, General Motors and Ford cease operations. A crisis of cataclysmic proportions, for sure.

Along with massive unemployment and the ripple effects through the web of suppliers to the industry, the failure of these companies would reach into this country's core identity. Our universities have educated generations of engineers who went on to form the highly skilled technical and design backbone of the United States. Research driven by the auto industry has sparked countless technological breakthroughs and innovative commercialization opportunities. The industry has helped maintain a strong cluster of employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations in everything from electronics, to the life sciences, to defense. Indeed, our sense of national competitiveness has been inextricably tied to the "Big Three."

In concrete terms, the American auto industry represents an enormous investment in expertise, facilities and infrastructure. We believe this investment is a platform, not just for innovation within the auto industry itself but also in related, emerging technologies. We want to work with the industry to build on our state's manufacturing heritage with the development of advanced manufacturing processes and the creation of more fuel-efficient vehicles. The future of this industry must be a sustainable one; already, our institutions have made significant commitments to research in auto-related energy technologies such as alternative fuels and energy storage.

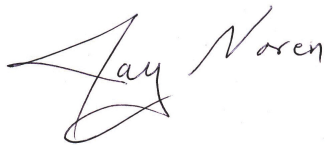
Together with manufacturers and suppliers, we can form strategic alliances that harness the expertise of our universities toward our country's future national competitiveness in this industry. Unlike the business challenges of previous generations, the work ahead requires a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach utilizing a wide array of disciplines in addition to engineering including economics, management, social science, policy, law, public health, medicine, natural resources and the sciences. We are committed to expanding our longstanding relationships with the American auto industry in ways that contribute to its competitiveness in the global marketplace.

We face unprecedented and enormously complex economic times. We must work together—government, business and higher education sectors—to regain economic stability and revitalize our manufacturing base. We believe that these extraordinary challenges require extraordinary solutions, including federal intervention and financial support mechanisms. So much is at stake, not just in our backyard but throughout America.

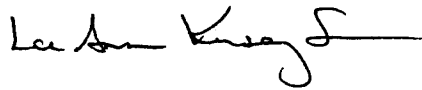
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Sue Coleman". The script is fluid and cursive.

Mary Sue Coleman
President, the University of Michigan

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Noren". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J".

Jay Noren
President, Wayne State University

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lou Anna Simon". The signature is cursive and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Lou Anna Simon
President, Michigan State University