

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 2nd, 2021

Mr. Brian Deese
Director
National Economic Council
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20504

Dear Director Deese,

We write to express our concerns about the impact that the global shortage of automotive-grade semiconductor chips will have on auto manufacturing in the United States. This shortage threatens our post-pandemic economic recovery, the consequences of which stand to be especially acute in dominant auto manufacturing states like ours. We believe that the incoming administration can continue to play a helpful role in alleviating the worst impacts of the shortage on American workers, and we urge you to work with us to address the global semiconductor shortage.

Automobiles have come a long way over the last 100 years. Today's cars are full of high-end electronic components that improve vehicle efficiency and safety. These electronic components rely upon semiconductors to function; they are just as essential to a modern car as the engine and transmission. Therefore, we are concerned about the consequences that the global shortage in semiconductors poses for the auto assembly and supplier sector.

In what should be good news for our country's economic recovery, demand for cars and trucks is now up, yet auto manufacturers unfortunately lack the necessary number of semiconductor chips to produce vehicles to meet that demand. Already some auto companies have idled U.S. plants and/or curtailed certain vehicle production in the United States as a result of the shortage of these key components. For every job on an automobile or light-truck assembly line, ten additional jobs are created or supported in the economy. As Senators from auto states, we are therefore concerned about the impact of the semiconductor shortage on our workers, our communities, and the nation's broader economic recovery.

Encouraged by your past support of the auto industry, we believe you can play an important role in reducing the impact of the global semiconductor shortage and take action to encourage increased production to meet immediate market needs. Specifically, we hope that you will consider engaging with semiconductor-producing nations, as well as the leading semiconductor manufacturing companies on this important issue.

Your leadership will help ensure that adequate quantities of semiconductors are made available for purchase by auto companies and their suppliers producing in the United States. All sectors of the economy need access to semiconductor chips, however we ask that the auto industry be recognized as the significant semiconductor consumer it is in any engagement. We also strongly urge you to support efforts to secure the necessary funding to swiftly implement the semiconductor-related provisions in the most recent National Defense Authorization Act, which would boost semiconductor manufacturing and incentivize the domestic production of semiconductors in the future. While this is not an immediate fix, this engagement is also vital to maintain the competitive advantage of American auto manufacturing.

We thank you for your attention to the global semiconductor shortage, and we appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
United States Senator



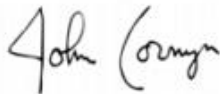
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



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John Cornyn
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Marsha Blackburn
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United States Senator



Mike Braun
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Richard Blumenthal
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Tammy Baldwin
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Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



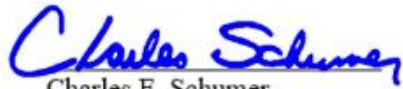
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