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May 7, 2025

Mr. Mark A. Behnke  
Mayor  
City of Battle Creek  
10 N. Division St.  
Battle Creek, MI 49016

Dear Mayor Behnke,

Thank you for your letter regarding Ford Motor Company's (Ford) plan to partner with Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. (CATL)—a blacklisted Chinese military company—and build a facility that would onshore Beijing's electric vehicle dominance in Michigan. I have noted your eager support for this corporate partnership, and your request that the project allow a Chinese military company to be eligible for the federal tax dollars of hardworking Americans.

As chairman of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, my committee has extensively investigated CATL, its supply chain links to the ongoing genocide of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, China, and its direct ties to the Chinese military. As you are aware, CATL is a Chinese military company as designated by the United States Department of Defense under Section 1260H of the National Defense Authorization Act.

If Battle Creek, Marshall, Calhoun County, and the Ford Motor Company proceed with partnering with CATL, they risk supporting a company linked to the erosion of American manufacturing, and the endangerment of the brave men and women who serve our country in the military, as well as a company linked to the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang. For your convenience, I am enclosing a 2024 letter—which was co-signed by the Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security, Congressman Mark Green, and the former senior U.S. Senator of Florida, Secretary of State Marco Rubio—which details over a half dozen connections between CATL and Chinese companies directly involved in the genocide in Xinjiang, China.

The Department of Defense's designation of CATL as a Chinese military company is intended to alert the American people about a company's affiliations with China's People's

Liberation Army. CATL currently advances Chinese Communist Party objectives, particularly involving dual-use battery technologies essential to military and surveillance applications. During his tenure in the Senate, Secretary of State Rubio and twenty-six other Republican and Democratic Members of Congress warned that CATL's lithium-ion batteries may soon power China's conventional submarine fleet.

As the mayor of a community that is home to Fort Custer and the Battle Creek VA Medical Center, I know that you value our nation's servicemembers and their sacrifices for our country. As you advocate for partnering with a Chinese military company, you should know that the servicemembers who train at Fort Custer could one day face CCP adversaries supported by CATL technology. Additionally, veterans at the VA Medical Center could one day be there to seek treatment for injuries caused by CATL technology.

In your letter, you wrote that our nation's auto industry faces significant challenges from CCP companies backed by the Chinese government. CATL is exactly that kind of company. It receives subsidies from the Chinese government, works for China's military, and seeks to dominate the global market for automotive batteries through unfair trade practices. By partnering with this company, you will help it advance its goals. This will make American auto manufacturing more dependent on China, not less.

The "pioneering technology" you write about will always be owned by a Chinese company, and American companies will never catch up if the federal government subsidizes CATL and other Chinese partnerships. Instead, federal tax dollars should support American efforts to create world-leading battery technology.

Over the past century, the Ford Motor Company and your city have each made transformative contributions to our nation and the American people. You are both iconic parts of our state and its history. However, welcoming CATL to your community poses significant security and financial risks to the people you represent. There are numerous companies in America and our allied nations that create jobs and produce automobile batteries. Developing American battery technology that leapfrogs ahead of the CCP is of utmost importance and American tax dollars should not support CCP companies.

The House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party has broad authority to investigate and submit policy recommendations on countering the economic, technological, security, and ideological threats of the Chinese Communist Party to the United States and allies and partners of the United States under H. Res. 5 Sec. 4(a).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We will continue to defend the interests of the American people, and I trust you will give these concerns the serious consideration they deserve.

Sincerely,



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John Moolenaar  
Chairman