

Ms. Mary Barra
Chief Executive Officer
General Motors
300 Renaissance Ctr.
Detroit, MI 48243

June 29, 2023

Dear Ms. Barra,

For over 100 years General Motors (GM) has been an integral part of Michigan's economy and community. During that time people across Michigan have also felt the adverse effects of GM's presence, including environmental degradation and the loss of livelihoods. From the hazardous waste cleanup at the Buick City Facility in Flint to the Tribar hexavalent chromium spill in the Huron River, the people of Michigan see daily the environmental toll of GM's presence in our state. In fact, in 2022 Cleveland-Cliffs, GM's six-time steel "supplier of the year", agreed to pay \$3 million in penalties for spilling cyanide and ammonia in Lake Michigan.¹ As recently as 2021, groups including the Sierra Club and Environment Michigan filed notice to sue Cleveland-Cliffs over "blatant disregard" for the state and federal laws and emissions rules at its plant in Dearborn, Michigan, a community known as Michigan's most "toxic" zip code.² However, the environmental and human costs of GM's material supply chain can be felt far beyond Michigan's border.

We welcome GM's commitment to become carbon-neutral by 2040 and eliminate tailpipe emissions from new light-duty vehicles by 2035, but more must be done to fully realize your goals and ensure a carbon-neutral supply chain free of human rights abuses and exploitation. A report released in December of 2022 by Sheffield Hallam University connected GM to aluminum and steel producers in the Xinjiang region of China using forced Uyghur labor.³ China produces more than 51% of global crude steel⁴ and more than half of primary aluminum worldwide, 90% of which is produced with electricity from coal.⁵ The eight aluminum producers in Xinjiang

¹ Brett Chase, "Cyanide Spill in Lake Michigan Tributary Leads to \$3 Million Settlement," Chicago Sun-Times, February 2022. Available at: <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2022/2/14/22933894/cyanide-spill-lake-michigan-settlement-arcelormittal-cleveland-cliffs-environmental-law-policy-suit>

² Christine Ferretti, "Environmental Groups File Notice to Sue Over Air Pollution Concerns at Dearborn Factory," Detroit News, March 2021. Available at: <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/environment/2021/03/03/dearborn-air-pollution-factory-lead-manganese-violations-health-asthma/6892506002/>

³ "Driving Force: Automotive Supply Chains and Forced Labor in the Uyghur Region," Sheffield Hallam University, December 2022. Available at: <https://www.shuforcedlabour.org/drivingforce/>

⁴ "Steel Industry in China – Statistics and Facts", Statista, November 2022. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/topics/5695/steel-industry-in-china/#topicOverview>

⁵ "Aluminum: The Car Industry's Blind Spot," Human Rights Watch, July 2021. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/07/22/aluminum-car-industrys-blind-spot/why-car-companies-should-address-human-rights>

represent 17% of China's total aluminum production and if treated as one company the region would rank as the world's largest aluminum producer.⁶

The steel sector is responsible for 8% of global carbon dioxide emissions annually⁷ and the auto sector accounts for 12% of global steel use.⁸ The aluminum sector is responsible for 1.1 billion tons of carbon dioxide pollution per year, about 2% of global emissions.⁹ According to the International Aluminum Institute (IAI), car manufacturers accounted for 18% of all aluminum consumed worldwide in 2019.¹⁰ As such, steel and aluminum have an important role in decarbonizing your material supply chain. In 2021, GM delivered 2.9 million vehicles in China and 2.3 million vehicles in the U.S. This makes you uniquely positioned to lead the industry transition to clean aluminum and steel for electric vehicles by committing to only source from producers using renewable energy and free of forced labor.

In addition to decarbonizing your material supply chains for your vehicles, GM must address Indigenous rights and ecological concerns in the aluminum industry. GM has invested \$650 million in Lithium Americas Corp to help the company develop its Thacker Pass lithium mine project, which violates Indigenous Peoples' rights and free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). Federal permitting was fast-tracked for the Thacker Pass project and the People of Red Mountain did not have sufficient time to weigh in before the plan to mine this land was approved, this violates the right of the local Indigenous People to self-determination.¹¹

Additionally, poorly managed bauxite mining creates serious ecological and human rights abuses.¹² A recent report from Human Rights Watch identified Indigenous communities in Guinea, Ghana, Malaysia, and Australia who experienced the loss of land, polluted waters, and loss of livelihoods from bauxite mining. In Guinea, it is estimated that over the next twenty years, bauxite mining will destroy more than 4,700 square kilometers of natural habitat, an area six times the size of New York City.¹³

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Christian Hoffmann, Michel Van Hoey, and Benedikt Zeumer, "Decarbonization Challenge for Steel", McKinsey, June 2021. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/metals-and-mining/our-insights/decarbonization-challenge-for-steel>

⁸ "Global Steel Usage By Sector 2019," Statista, June 2022. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1107721/steel-usage-global-segment/>

⁹ Emily Benson and William Alan Reinsch, "Decarbonizing Aluminum: Rolling Out a More Sustainable Sector," Center for Strategic International Studies, February 2022. Available at: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/decarbonizing-aluminum-rolling-out-more-sustainable-sector>

¹⁰ "IAI Material Flow Model – 2021 Update," International Aluminum Institute, https://www.world-aluminium.org/media/filer_public/2021/05/26/iai_material_flow_model__2021_update.pdf

¹¹ Ernest Scheyder, "GM to help Lithium Americas develop Nevada's Thacker Pass Mine," Reuters, January 2023. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/gm-lithium-americas-develop-thacker-pass-mine-nevada-2023-01-31/>

¹² "Aluminum: The Car Industry's Blind Spot," Human Rights Watch, July 2021. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/07/22/aluminum-car-industrys-blind-spot/why-car-companies-should-address-human-rights>

¹³ Ibid.

The impact of GM's supply chain can be felt by people across Michigan and in communities around the globe. The ability of GM to meet its climate and human rights commitments is deeply intertwined with the decarbonization of its supply chain starting with steel and aluminum. As a global leader in the automotive industry and a major consumer of steel and aluminum, we are calling on GM to:

- Adopt specific annual targets for purchases of carbon-free aluminum, reaching zero-carbon aluminum emissions by 2030.
- Commit to procure, specify or stock 50% net zero steel by 2030.
- Join global initiatives supporting value chain emission reductions, including ResponsibleSteel and the Aluminum Stewardship Initiative.
- Commit to ending the sourcing from any steel or aluminum supplier connected to human rights violations or the exploitation of Indigenous lands or people.
- Develop a public plan to assess human rights risks regularly, including at the bauxite mining, alumina refining, and smelting level.
- Publicly disclose information regarding your steel and aluminum supply chains, including mines, refineries, and smelters.
- Commit to supporting manufacturers with strong labor standards to help grow domestic manufacturing of clean technology parts and materials.
- Commit to an equitable transition to electric vehicle (EV) production for Michigan workers including the reshoring of EV manufacturing jobs.

As a global leader in the automobile industry, we urge GM to hold its suppliers to the same commitments to the environment and human rights you have made. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these matters at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Detroit Hamtramck Coalition for Advancing Healthy Environments
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Detroitters Working for Environmental Justice
Earth Walk
Environmental Transformation Movement of Flint
Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Michigan United
Michigan Alliance for Justice In Climate (MAJIC)
Mighty Earth
Mixto Communications
Sierra Club Michigan Chapter
Vote Solar Michigan