DEBBIE DINGELL
12TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

116 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4071

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEES ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
DIGITAL COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
ENVIRONMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES:

19855 WEST OUTER DRIVE
SUITE 103-E
DEARBORN, MI 48124
(313) 278-2936

301 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE
SUITE 400
YPSILANTI, MI 48197
(734) 481-1100

WEBSITE: DEBBIEDINGELL.HOUSE.GOV

April 19, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

This letter is regarding reports that your administration is proposing to drastically cut funding for the Federal Vehicle and Fuels Standards and Certification Program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which does critically important work on fuel economy and vehicle emissions. The proposed cuts, if implemented, could result in the closure of the National Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Although Congress has the final say on all spending matters, I urge you to reconsider this misguided idea in any final budget proposal you submit to Congress.

Work at this lab is conducted by highly trained and experienced staff with backgrounds in engineering, chemistry, toxicology, law, and economics. Their research, testing, analysis and technological studies provide critical background for the establishment and monitoring of both CAFE and emission standards. Policy makers like me depend on their work as do consumers who are being protected by these environmental regulations.

Fuel economy standards provide real benefits to industry, the consumer and the environment. Consumers are demanding more fuel efficient vehicles from the automakers and companies have made real strides to improve fuel economy while still designing cars that people want to buy. Strong standards like we have in place today will save consumers money at the pump, reduce carbon emissions and drive innovation in the industry.

The Ann Arbor lab also does important work to reduce vehicle emissions. The EPA's work on vehicle engine and fuel economy testing is critical to ensure that the intent of legislation and regulation on emissions standards and CAFE is met and that the benefits of these programs become a reality. Yet all of these gains could be eliminated if EPA stopped their critical work in this area. We should all be working together to improve and strengthen our fuel economy programs rather than gutting the EPA's budget which does so much important work in this area. The geographical location of this lab is also important to note, given its proximity to major research facilities of every domestic automaker.

For me, it is important to understand their work and analysis. That is why I had requested a visit to the lab and meetings with their team this week but was denied access to the facility. This is extremely troubling and raises serious questions about Executive branch closing access to government facilities and preventing Members of Congress from conducting necessary oversight. While I intend to respect the request not to tour the lab this week, it is my intention to visit the lab during the Congressional recess in May. It is essential that Members of Congress have access to federal government facilities, especially those within their districts. I hope this represents a one-time issue and is not part of a broader trend of shutting down access to Members of Congress and the constituents we represent.

Cutting EPA's fuel economy and vehicle emissions budget would create uncertainty, cost jobs, and could potentially allow other nations to gain a competitive edge in this critically important work. Please reject this misguided proposal in any final budget proposal submitted to Congress.

Sincerely,

Debbie Dingell

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Mick Mulvaney, Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable Scott Pruitt, Administrator, US EPA