



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Haley Stevens (D-MI)

Research and Technology Subcommittee Hearing:

“Accelerating Progress: U.S. Surface Transportation Research”

February 11, 2026

Thank you, Chairman Obernolte, and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

For decades, Michigan has designed, engineered, and manufactured the components that made American vehicles the best in the world. I’ve spent my career fighting for the workers of Michigan, from helping run the Auto Rescue for President Obama that saved 200,000+ Michigan jobs, to my work on this Committee helping pass the CHIPS and Science Act to get U.S.-made cars back on the lot after supply chain disruptions.

And last summer, I introduced the No Chinese Cars Act which would stop the flow of Chinese cars and parts into the United States, undermining American autos and threatening Michigan jobs. I will always fight to bolster Michigan manufacturing, protect Michigan jobs, and support our best-in-class workforce. That effort starts here by investing in next-generation technologies.

This hearing comes at a pivotal moment for the future of mobility and American competitiveness. The upcoming surface transportation reauthorization is Congress’ opportunity to keep the United States, and Michigan, at the forefront of the global auto industry.

At its core, this is a choice: whose side are we on? Do we export American cars or American jobs? The research and development investments supported by this Committee will determine whether America stays in the driver’s seat or lets our adversaries take the wheel.

Let me start with what's working. The bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* has been a success story. In Michigan, we've seen over \$32 million in Federal Highway Administration grants invested in smart intersection and connected vehicle research at the University of Michigan. Oakland County – the county that keeps the world on wheels, where 76 of the top 100 global auto parts suppliers do business – has leveraged these investments to strengthen our manufacturing ecosystem.

But we can't get complacent, especially in setting our Nation’s surface transportation R&D agenda for years to come. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials recommends that, at a minimum, Congress should maintain funding at the current law’s levels, adjusting for inflation.

Every dollar we don't invest in American transportation technology and infrastructure is a dollar of advantage we hand to our competitors.

Just a few years ago, Chinese vehicles barely registered on the global stage. Today, China is the world's largest auto producer, flooding markets with cheap, largely electric vehicles. Congress cannot ignore these realities or the pressure these Chinese vehicles and components flooding the market put on Michigan manufacturers and auto workers.

Despite misguided trade and manufacturing policies by this Administration, Michigan is still fighting, but our workers need us in their corner. The Science Committee has an important voice in the surface transportation bill reauthorization, and this is an important hearing for us to discuss what investments will keep America at the forefront of next-generation mobility technologies.

I'm particularly pleased to welcome Dr. Henry Liu, Director of "M-City" at the University of Michigan. Investments like M-City represent exactly the kind of research infrastructure that keeps America competitive. I look forward to hearing more.

I'm confident we can find common ground on investments that keep America competitive, support American workers, and ensure that when the world buys the vehicles of tomorrow, they're designed, engineered, and built right here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.