



March 6, 2020

Governor Gretchen Whitmer
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Re: Michigan Businesses Support Action on Climate

Dear Governor Gretchen Whitmer,

As major businesses, institutions, and employers in Michigan, we write to express our support for advancing statewide strategies to mitigate climate change. We have each made significant investments to reduce our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions because climate change poses a material risk to our businesses, threatens the competitiveness and livelihoods of our supply chains, and impacts the communities and landscapes in which we operate. The cascading effects of climate change extend from public health consequences to reduced crop production to unreliable infrastructure—all of which are critical elements to our state's economy and well-being. Because of these risks to our businesses, customers, and employees, we view climate action as a top priority for Michigan - and we are doing our part.

And we are not alone. In Michigan, and across the country, companies are driving the demand for emissions reductions. More than half¹ of Michigan's 25 largest employers have already invested in clean energy or set goals to reduce GHG emissions, and a total of 44 companies with a presence in the state have committed to powering their operations with 100 percent renewable energy. To remain at the cutting edge in an increasingly competitive marketplace, we are looking to take advantage of clean technologies like energy efficiency, energy storage, and electric vehicles—technologies which already support over [126,000](#) Michigan jobs. Renewed state commitment to clean energy and climate action will attract new businesses and drive new jobs and investments, enhancing the vitality, resiliency, and growth of our state.

Please find details about each of our companies' commitments to emissions reductions below:

Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care, operating in 16 hospitals, and 700 sites of care in the state of Michigan. Ascension participates in the Health Care Climate Challenge and has signed We Are Still In. The Ascension Environmental Stewardship Program started in 2008 with a focus on energy efficiency. Medxcel (Ascension's facility management

¹ General Motors, Ford Motor, Lear, Whirlpool, Dow, Kellogg, Stryker, CooperStandard, BorgWarner, State of Michigan, Michigan State University, KitchenAid, McLaren Health Care

subsidiary) tracks energy use at all sites of care and has demonstrated that from July 2008 through June 2018, its acute care facilities achieved energy use reductions of 29.2 percent, \$61.9 million in cost avoidance and 1.5 million tons reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. In 2012, Ascension became a founding partner in the U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings Challenge with a goal to reduce energy use 20 percent by 2020 across its hospitals – and met the goal three years early. Medxcel is now implementing LED lighting retrofits and deploying building management systems with a real-time dashboard at all hospitals.

Tackling climate change is essential to protect Michigan's thriving brewing industry as well as our state's economy, environment, and quality of life. In 2012, **Brewery Vivant's** investments in efficient heating and cooling technology, a rainwater catchment system, and water conservation were recognized with the first ever Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for a production brewery in the United States. And in 2014, we became the 4th certified [B Corporation](#) in West Michigan. We source more than 10% of our energy use from on-site solar panels and are actively working towards greater carbon reductions in our operations.

At **Crystal Mountain**, we believe the prosperity of our people and our environment are interdependent. This belief has driven several clean energy initiatives that reduce the carbon footprint of our resort including building the Midwest's first LEED certified spa, providing geo-thermal heating and cooling for our new, 30,000 square foot Inn building and advocacy for our electric Co-op's decision to provide all of its customers with over 60% zero carbon electricity. Re-lamping just one of our buildings with LED's now saves enough electricity to power a Chevy Volt more than 200,000 miles each year. We were also the first Michigan resort to provide free electric vehicle charging, which complements our walkable and bikeable village design. These initiatives attract new guests to our resort, increase the resiliency of our mountain community and provide a cleaner environment for all to enjoy.

Sustainability is central to our business at **EILEEN FISHER** and that includes efforts to reduce our carbon footprint. We design clothes that are meant to last and strive to use fewer resources in the process. In 2009 we launched the Renew program, a circular product initiative created to reduce the strain of the apparel industry on our planet's natural resources. We all have a role to play if we are to address climate change and we encourage Michigan to fully embrace clean energy and other innovative low-carbon solutions.

General Mills was the first company across any sector to set a science-based target initiative (SBTi) commitment in 2015 for GHG reduction of 28% across our entire value-chain out to Scope 3 (agriculture) by 2025 and to sustainable emissions levels in line with scientific consensus by 2050. Like others among our coalition, our products and value chains are rooted in the health of agricultural systems – systems that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and can play an important role in reducing emissions. Last year, General Mills announced a commitment to advance regenerative agriculture on one million acres of farmland by 2030. In Michigan, we launched a three-

year pilot on dairy farms to study the impacts of regenerative agriculture on soil health and profitability, and modeling will be used to inform and improve state CAFO regulations. We also worked with 16 dairies to sustainably source milk for our Reed City yogurt plant that achieved an 11% reduction in GHG emissions between 2016-2018. General Mills is also proud to have recently achieved 100% renewable power for our direct operational needs in the United States.

At **Kellogg**, we know the risks posed by climate change threaten the viability of our business and the livelihoods of our farmers. That's why as part of our Better Days global purpose platform, we are doing our part to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions in our plants by 65% and working towards 100% renewable energy by 2050. We are also partnering directly with our farmers to support research and training in sustainable farming and encourage adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture - a program that addresses food security and climate challenges. By acting on climate, we can safeguard our local economy for years to come.

As the largest food company in the world, **Nestlé** recognizes the magnitude of the risks posed by climate change and our responsibility to act in scale. We are committed to reducing GHG emissions across our value chain in line with science-based targets and have set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. A third of our factories are already run on 100% renewable energy and, by 2050, we plan to source all of our factories, warehouses, logistics, and offices with renewables -- including our many locations in Michigan. Our Stanwood plant was among the first food and beverage manufacturing buildings in the United States to achieve LEED certification and our Fremont plant supplies organic waste to a local biodigester to reduce methane emissions and produce clean energy. Taking action to mitigate the effects of climate change is necessary to help ensure the ongoing success of our own business and those in our supply chain, as well as protecting the world around us.

As a global operator of 37 mountain resorts, **Vail Resorts** is passionate about the environment in which we live, work and play. After more than a decade of setting and reaching environmental goals, in 2017 we set our sights on zero – to achieve a zero net operating impact by 2030. Commitment to Zero, Vail Resorts' bold sustainability initiative includes reaching zero net emissions; zero waste to landfill; and zero net operating impact on forests and habitat across each of our resorts – including Mt. Brighton in Michigan. It has become a part of the fabric of our company as we work every day to operationalize sustainability. With each business initiative we undertake — whether it be snowmaking or restaurant renovations — sustainability has a seat at the table. Over the last two years we invested nearly \$5 million in energy efficiency capital projects, collaborated with local utilities to bring more renewables into their energy portfolios and signed a 12-year virtual power purchase agreement to enable the development of a new wind farm and reduce the emissions associated with our North American electricity usage for FY19 by nearly 100 percent when it comes online this year.

Worthen Industries is committed to doing our part to drive a clean energy economy. We have invested in numerous energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at all of our facilities. We have the largest rooftop solar array in New Hampshire, and we have retrofitted our building in Grand Rapids to support rooftop solar panels. We are also investing in clean transportation by sourcing our vehicle fleets with hybrid electric and other fuel-efficient vehicles. These clean energy investments help our company both lower energy costs and improve the predictability of those costs, and, with the right policies in place, will contribute to decreasing the strain on the electric grid at large. We encourage Michigan to embrace the transition to clean energy, which will help spur economic growth in the state and allow companies like ours to meet our sustainability goals.

As large employers and major energy consumers with diverse supply chains, we understand firsthand the economic risk posed by climate change and the parallel opportunity presented by a low-carbon economy. Our companies are making investments to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions because it supports our bottom line and because it is our responsibility to consider the impacts of our operations. We are proud of Michigan's commitment to the [U.S. Climate Alliance](#) and support Governor Whitmer in taking new action to ensure we, as a state, do not fall short on our promise. By taking climate change seriously, Michigan sends a signal that it is committed to keeping our businesses viable and Michigan prosperous.

Sincerely,

Ascension
Brewery Vivant
Crystal Mountain
EILEEN FISHER
General Mills

Kellogg Company
Mt. Brighton and Vail Resorts
Nestlé
Worthen Industries

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