In the Matter of:  

DISTRIBUTIONAL EFFECTS: 
IMPACTS ON UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES 

Pages: 1 through 114
Place: Southfield, Michigan
Date: March 30, 2022
THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

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Wednesday, March 30, 2022
Teleconference
Detroit Marriott Southfield
Salon A/B
27033 Northwestern Highway
Southfield, Michigan 48034

The roundtable commenced, pursuant to notice, at 1:10 p.m., before the United States International Trade Commission.

PARTICIPANTS:

USITC:
CHAIR JASON E. KEARNS, Moderator
VICE CHAIR RANDOLPH J. STAYIN
COMMISSIONER DAVID S. JOHANSON
COMMISSIONER RHONDA K. SCHMIDTLEIN
COMMISSIONER AMY A. KARPEL
ROOP BHATTI, Chief of Staff
VILAS PATHIKONDA, Economist to Chair Kearns
MICHAEL ROBBINS, Economist to Commissioner Johanson
WILLIAM R. BISHOP, Supervisory Hearings and Information Officer
TYRELL BURCH, Management Analyst
KATHRYN (KATY) DYNAN, ASL Interpreter
PATRICIA WIEST, ASL Interpreter
PARTICIPANTS:  (Cont'd)

External:

IN-PERSON PARTICIPANTS:

DORETHEA BROWN-MAXEY, National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians
DR. NOEL NEVSHEHIR, Automation Alley
PIERCE O’CONNELL, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, TAA/RR

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS:

MIKYIA S. AARON, Laborers’ Local 1191
MARK DEPAOLI, United Auto Workers Local 600
BRETT GIERAK, Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Union Local 2
TOM GODDEERIS, Detroit Future City’s Center for Equity, Engagement, and Research
ANDREA HUNTER, United Steelworkers (Local 1299)
JOHN JEFFERS, Alliance for American Manufacturing
CHAD JOHNSON, The Akana Group
DR. SHARON MILBERGER, Wayne State University’s Michigan Developmental Disabilities Institute (MI-DDI)
RIC PREUSS, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
MIKE RAFFERTY, New Detroit
ANTHONY ROBBINS, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers/Nicholson Terminal and Dock
DR. IAN ROBINSON, Huron Valley Area Labor Federation
MELISSA SHELDON, SPARK – Ann Arbor
VICTOR STORINO, Republic Technology International/USW
CHAIR KEARNS: Good afternoon, everyone. I am Jason Kearns, a Commissioner and the current Chair of the U.S. International Trade Commission. On behalf of my colleagues at the Commission, welcome to our sixth roundtable to study the distributional effects of trade and trade policy on U.S. workers.

I will be the moderator for today's event. One of my fellow Commissioners, David Johanson, is here with me today. The Agency's other Commissioners, Randy Stayin, Rhonda Schmidtlein, and Amy Karpel, are also actively listening and may ask some questions towards the end of our discussion.

Commission staff members Jeff Horowitz and Simon Adhanom organized this roundtable, and I want to thank them for their efforts.

Before we get started, I'd like to tell you a little about the Commission and the purpose of this roundtable. The Commission is an independent agency. It is not part of the President's Administration, and it's not part of Congress. We are also nonpartisan in the sense that no more than three of the six Commissioners can come from the same political party, and we're well-insulated from the political crosswinds given, for example, that each of us
serves a term of nine years and cannot seek reappointment. Among our functions, the Commission provides the President, the U.S. Trade Representative, and Congress with independent analysis and information on matters relating to international trade, and that's why we're here today.

The U.S. Trade Representative asked us to gather input on how international trade affects U.S. workers differently by skill, wage, and salary level, gender, race and ethnicity, age, and income level, especially as it affects underrepresented and underserved communities.

There will be seven roundtables in all, each focusing on a different topic. The Commission will then submit a written report to USTR summarizing the information we gather. This report will be delivered in October and will be publicly available.

While the Commission is based in Washington, D.C., we are holding today's roundtable in the Detroit area to hear how this community is affected by trade. We chose Detroit given the region's historical connection to U.S. manufacturing and the racial and ethnic diversity that exists here.

I personally got to know the region and many great people from this area through my work for many years as a member of the staff for a U.S. Congressman for the Detroit area, and it is a pleasure to be here today.
My role today as moderator is to ask questions and manage the flow of discussions so that everyone has a chance to speak. Your role as a participant is to share experiences, opinions, and information and to respond to one another. Let's try to get a good back and forth going.

I'm very happy with the diversity and breadth of experience you all can contribute to this roundtable. The group assembled in person and online includes union leaders, economic and workforce development experts, business leaders, and, importantly, workers. Please don't be shy about sharing your perspective. There are no right or wrong answers. We want your candid thoughts.

So, before we get started, I have a few housekeeping items. Our discussion today is scheduled to last for about two hours, but we might go a bit longer if things get going well. In our experience so far, sometimes these things get off to a slow start, but then things start to kind of snowball, and so hopefully that'll happen again today, and we may go beyond the two-hour mark if you all are able to do so, and we'll try to take a break sometime around 2:15.

Please remember that this roundtable is open to the public and the press, and the discussion today is being transcribed for the record, and a link to the transcript will be included in the final report to USTR, so don't share any
information that you view as confidential.

If we do have media joining us today, please reach out to our External Affairs Department if you have any questions. The contact information for External Affairs is on the ITC's website.

If participants in the room would like to make a comment, please place your name card on its end like this, and I'll call on you. Virtual participants can use the Webex Raise Hand feature, and I will call on you, and if that doesn't work for some reason, you can just raise your real hand and I'll look out for that as well.

If you are participating by phone, you may jump in when you sense there's a pause in the conversation. Please remember that only registered participants will be invited to speak during today's discussion. If you are not a registered participant and you'd like to provide input at a future roundtable or would like to submit written comments, please send an email to D-E, as in Distributional Effects, de@usitc.gov.

Whenever you make a comment, please state your name so it's clear to everyone who is speaking, and if there's an organization with which you're affiliated that you'd like to identify, please also state the name of that organization or firm when you comment.

Once again, I'd like to thank you all for being
here today. I'm looking forward to an enlightening conversation, and so let's get started.

MR. SECRETARY: Mr. Chair, if I may, I see that we have a few folks by telephone, and I want to make sure that if you are participants, that I can change your name so that we're able to speak with you. So if I could have my three phone callers unmute yourselves and identify yourselves if you are a participant.

(No response.)

MR. SECRETARY: Okay. I will take that as you are just listening in today. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: All right. Thank you, Bill.

All right. So we'll get started with the questions. In essence, we're going to break down the discussion into three sections. The first section we'll spend roughly 30 minutes on, maybe a little bit longer, and I just want to kind of get to know the context in which we're having this discussion. I'd like to know more about Detroit and the Detroit area, how your group fits within that area. If you feel like it's a group that's been discriminated against, tell us more about that and just the history of Detroit and so forth. We just want to kind of introduce -- have you all introduce the area and its people to us.

Then we'll spend the longest amount of time, maybe
about an hour, talking about how trade has affected the region and the communities in the region, or if you're from a group outside the region, tell us about that as well. I think there's a Native American representative here that's not from the region, but we want to hear from her as well.

And, finally, we'll talk for about 30 minutes about what policy tools may be needed or resources may be needed to improve whatever issues you think we need to address with respect to trade policy.

So, again, let's start with the first section, context. I'd like to hear from you about how different groups, the groups that you most identify with, are historically situated in the Detroit region's labor market.

So, for example, with respect to the communities that you are a part of or are the most familiar with, what structural factors have affected the ability to find and hold a job and earn a living wage in the Detroit region, what changes have there been over the past 25 or 30 years.

So, for example, what does discrimination look like in the Detroit area, including the legacy of discrimination from decades past. Tell us about what a lack of community support for women there may be in terms of childcare and how that affects the job market, or simply the lack of jobs in the region and how that looks from your perspective.

So I will start with that. Does anyone want to
jump in with an answer? Thank you. Ms. Brown-Maxey. Am I pronouncing your name right?

MS. BROWN-MAXEY: Yes, Dorethea Brown-Maxey. My name is Dorethea Brown-Maxey, and I am the President of NABET-CWA, that's the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians. I represent those from Fox 2 and also WDIV Local 4, which is an NBC affiliate. I am also the Vice President of the CLC here, the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO.

And I work here and I've been in this community, born and raised, and trade has affected my community a lot. As you know, Michigan is known as the Motor City, and there have been over 120,000 jobs lost due to trade.

Fortunate for me, I am in a union and I have a good contract, so my job is somewhat secure in terms that I can negotiate, but a lot of my colleagues and folks that I live around in my community does not have that affordability to do that, and they have lost jobs and they are suffering, and trade is just part of it, and companies are using trade as a windowsill, if you will, to threaten and to take jobs overseas.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Dorethea.

Anyone else like to jump in? Mr. O'Connell?

MR. O'CONNELL: Pierce O'Connell with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunities, specifically with the Trade Adjustment Assistance and Rapid Response Team.
In Michigan, specifically within in Detroit within the past five years, we've identified at least 1400 jobs that were impacted within the region that were certified through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program. In a single city in Michigan, 1400 jobs were lost over a period of time within the seal industry.

Over 12,000 jobs and 126 organizations have been impacted by trade through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program. These are individuals who work within the United States as a result of our global economy and a capitalistic society.

When we're specifically taking a look at the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, this helps individuals to not only get re-employed at a quicker and comparable competitive wage, it offers them their own choice within this program. One of the biggest barriers that is placed within the program is the knowledge of the program not only for employees that are impacted but also employers as well.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Pierce.

Next up, we have Ms. Hunter, I think virtually appearing.

MS. HUNTER: Greetings, everyone. My name is Andrea Hunter, and I'm the President of United Steelworkers Local 1299 here, of course, representing the employees from Great Lakes Works Division, which is a part of United States
Steel Corporation.

Trade has totally devastated our community, of course, the trade agreements have seriously impacted. I have a lot of my members who qualify for TAA training assistance and the TRA because I lost 1200 workers here just due to layoffs and due to different trades, the manipulations that are allowed with China and other countries, you know, going around the red tape, that's seriously impacted our community, my retirees, my active employees, it has really devastated the steel industry.

And as we sit up there, we get tariffs on steel, but then, after those tariffs on steel, we come to essential workers, they're all different things, but then the loopholes allow also the steel to come into play. What really bothers us more as steelworkers here is that there are certain regulations that we have to do to sell steel to our competitors that foreign countries do not have to, and that's a big problem because it affects our communities.

Now, when I lost those of my employees here in -- our infamous -- down here at U.S. Steel, what's really bad about it, it affects the communities. Now those gas stations are shut down because the workers are not coming to work as much. The restaurants are shut down. All the business in the communities are shut down. So it has an effect on not just the union represented members but the non-union
represented and the small business owners, and it impacts the whole state.

But these trade deals, as long as they're allowed to be manipulated, they're not as good as the words they're written on because, if the point is to, you know, minimize -- about our products here, but it still happens through other loopholes, this is devastating our workforce, devastating -- it just devastates what I believe is the future of America because, without working -- and I don't like to say middle class because -- working class, I like to say working class, the people that came out here that worked in our steel mills, the infamous steel mill, because we brought you number one, we get awards for our safety record, we get awards for quality, and how are we repaid?

The vendors that come out there, the different corporations, the unions that come out and service our plant lost their jobs. So it's a domino effect that affects the incomes, which affect the tax base of America, and it needs to be addressed. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you, Andrea.

Mr. Robbins?

MR. ROBBINS: Good evening, everyone. My name is Anthony Robbins. I'm the Assistant Directing Business Representative for the Machinists Union District 60 located out of the Metro Detroit area.
I wanted to add kind of a little impact. As Andrea was speaking for U.S. Steel, we represent Nicholson Terminal & Dock that is directly next door from the U.S. Steel there in Ecorse, along with another facility in Detroit. One of our biggest jobs there is to offload imported steel.

With that being said, over the course of the last three years, our members there had went three years without wage increases. The company Nicholson was at the brink of bankruptcy. And, again, as Ms. Hunter said, you know, it not only affected our workers there as 95 percent of them were laid off over the last course of the last three years, but the enormous effect that it had on the community and the area, especially in Ecorse. The community there is mostly shipping and importing.

With that being said, it wasn't just the labor unions or the companies there that were impacted but the community in general.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you, Anthony.

Next up, Mr. DePaoli.

MR. DEPAOLI: Good afternoon. My name is Mark DePaoli. I'm with UAW Local 600, and I believe the question is how this relates -- how the trade relates to underprivileged people.

So we represent a diverse group, including the Ford Rouge Complex, which is a gigantic complex, right, with five
manufacturing plants in auto. Also a steel mill. So we're very diverse, so if we lose work, it affects all groups, right.

But the domino effect that ends up taking place goes into our independent parts suppliers where most of those are located in Detroit, the majority of the workers are minorities, and they end up being the ones hit the hardest because like, say, at Ford, you know, we have some protections put in place through some good bargaining agreements that we've gotten over the years, and in that parts supplier sector, we don't have that. So those people end up being affected even worse than all the rest, so, to me, that's how it hits the underprivileged people more when we suffer from poor trade laws.

CHAIR KEARNS: And can you say more about how underserved groups are hurt worse by the impacts of trade?

MR. DEPAOLI: Yes. So, again, you know, when we look at our large group at the Rouge Complex that we represent, we have some protections in place through bargaining agreements and that. There's other facilities because Ford being such a large company, there's other facilities, not that anybody wants to have to relocate because that's bad too, but there's other facilities that they can go to. There's just a lot more protections there.

But, as that domino effect takes place, right, when
we lose work at one of our Ford plants, it then affects our independent parts suppliers that are more smaller companies, and they typically -- they just shed workers or go out of business, and those people then suffer the worst, and that's where the majority of our minority workers or underprivileged workers are at.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much.

Mr. Storino, I think we might have you by telephone.

MR. SECRETARY: You're on mute, Victor.

MR. STORINO: I'm sorry. As I said, my name is Victor Storino, and I am from Chicago, what they call southeast side Chicago, and we have several steel mills. We have Wisconsin Steel, U.S. Steel, Rolling Mill, Indalake, and Republic Steel. I was a worker at Republic Steel. I came from Italy. I got a job as a laborer, and I move up through the line of -- you know, the big line that you bid for different jobs. At the end, I was a mechanic.

And I see how the poorer people like you guys have been talking about throughout, you know, Detroit and all the area, how they're affected worse than any other person in here, I say especially because of the education factor.

I was lucky that I graduated from high school and nighttime school, and I attend junior college, and I get involved in the union quickly, and I see what's going on, how
people are discriminated by race, religion, where you come from and all that, and when the jobs were going down, at first, they were together, but then there was a buyer or because you were not needed.

Then, when you talk about imports, imports are the key that ruined our steel industry. They claim that they would not modernize. Republic Steel modernized their perennial tester and their Cuba furnace, but steel went down, see. And the thing is that the law that applies to the industry in the United States, they're not fair. What the industry over here that sets the pollution and all that, see, it doesn't apply to the foreign countries.

And it's also the way the imports of steel, there were claims because we cannot do the steel over here because of lead. And so they were importing the steel from Germany, China, and a lot of the people that were working that type of steel, when we were melting steel like that, they were laid off. And the processing of the lead steel is a lot complicated than the regular steel, see.

And the laws have to change, have to change if you're going to save plain steel but also how the steel is made. If it's made in the United States and you have to observe all the regulations, then make China have to do the same thing, and the work should be treated the same.

The way I feel personally, I'm not talking about
anybody else, but personally the corporations got tired of dealing with the union, and they went overseas to do away with the union, and you see what happened.

So they claim that it was too expensive over here to make Republic steel, but, in reality, how can they be profitable unless they get a deal with the government to deal with it. They don't deal with people. They deal strictly with the government, and the government will give some kind of deal to them. They can do that, see. And then they ship all the production over here, and what happened to our steel? It costs more money.

So the law must change, and the workers should have a personality where this negotiation is going on in a foreign -- you know, I'm sorry, but my English, I'm getting too excited because, I tell you what, where I worked shut down, went bankrupt, I lost my pension, and I got a little pension from PBGC, and so that pension is very little. And I'm lucky I still have Social Security, and I make it, but the future of the people that lost their job that were younger, and they were not able to get an education, they're very, very bad.

And what the government should take into consideration is you have immigration, and when the people come over here to get a job, the employer, before they teach them the job, there were jobs like a manual job. It's not
like today. Today, it's technology and you must have
education, and most of the people 45, 50 years old, they do
not have an education. They didn't go to school -- barely
went to school like I did.

And the place where I worked, believe it or not,
there were two people that hanged themselves, and I was the
union representative at the time, and that was the worst part
of my life when you see a friend of yours and you find out
that due to the shutdown of the mill he hung himself or
herself.

A lot of people, they went berserk. You know, they
go how are we going to live, because that's all they had.
You had the five steel industries around the area, and all
related jobs that were servicing the mills, they were shut
down, machine shops, motor repair shops, machinists, all the
shops that were a supplier, they were shut down.

And, actually, now some jobs are coming in, but
before it was like a lost town, it was south Chicago. If you
went to south Chicago, Commercial Avenue, it was beautiful to
see all the stores thriving. It was like downtown Chicago.
But you go there now, it's like a ghost town. A lot of the
houses are dilapidated, and that's all you see. All the
steel mills are being razed to the ground. There's nothing
there.

So, unless they change the law, imports law, or
they enforce Section 32, because if they comply with the
regulations that we had, it will change, but they don't. And
then you take them to court. By the time they go to court, the
process, another steel mill is shut down. Not actually shut
down, another machine is shut down.

What happens to those people? They're on the
unemployment line if you're young, you know. If you're an old
man like me, you take whatever money you can get from Social
Security. If PBGC, you know, you qualify for a little bit. Some
they don't qualify for PBGC because they didn't have enough
time in the mill. Some less than six months or a month, a week, and they were not qualified to get PBGC. And how do you live like that?

Some, you know, they're 35 years old, nine years in the
mill, they were not able to get anything. And there was tremendous strain on my life when they were coming in and asking me, you know, upset, what are we going to do now? They say, are they going to shut us down? I say yeah.

I say, what are you going to do? What can I do? We can't strike, can't do nothing like that. So you try to appeal to management to do something, but they always said we cannot compete anymore and we're shutting down. They said you get whatever you've got coming, two, three weeks severance pay or it once was five weeks, and you're on your on.
So the law must change. You know, for the workers, it don't matter if you're an immigrant or you were born in this country, and they know what kind of people they are who have been displaced, you know. It's not like it's unknown, especially the corporations.

If the government asks the corporations what kind of employees do you have, what kind of education do they have, what kind of training do they have because they know what the manufacturing, they can give it to them, by doing something, they have to do something for the employee before they get displaced so they can go to another job. If they don't have some program like that implemented, if they don't implement those programs, you're going to see a lot more worse place than what I went through and experienced.

So I'm sorry if you cannot understand me, but it's the best I could do, and everybody have a nice day, and thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Storino. We understand you very well. I have a lot of follow-up questions for you, but I want to turn to some other folks first before coming back to you if I can.

MR. STORINO: I will after your questions. I do better answering your questions than just speaking.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Jeffers?
MR. JEFFERS: Yes. My name is John Jeffers. I'm with the Alliance for American Manufacturing, but, before this, I was a three-term president with USW Local 8183 in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. I worked at a place called Horsehead Corporation, who decided to shut down because of trade. Again, we was already hit hard by the layoffs of the steel mills in the area, by the pipe mills in the area, then our company shuts down, 800 people lost their jobs.

The communities around there, also the mom-and-pop stores, the, you know, grocery stores and all that, were shutting down. A lot of people don't take in to the aspects of the general life of a person.

In my Local, I've had a couple people that had to seek mental health treatment because of the shutdown because they lost their jobs. A couple people committed suicide. We've had a lot of divorces because of this.

This is the stuff that trade impacts, what trade has impacted on local people, and I think it's something -- you have a lot of these ghost towns, what I call ghost towns, because the mills got up and left, and all it is basically is your under-deserving community, it's your-low income people that were good -- that were making a lot of good money, but all of a sudden they lost their job.

And I myself was lucky that we got TAA. I went to college, got a degree, and ended up where I'm at. But there
was a lot of them that are over 50. Who wants to hire a
person over 50, you know? They got all kind of -- maybe they
might be on medications, maybe they use a lot of their
hospitalization. Companies are not looking for that, you
know.

So, again, we need to look at the human impact of
trade, not just the impact of, well, you know, we're going to
make more money here, so we're going to move there. Let's
look at the human impact, the suicides and everything else.

You know, there's a place called Aliquippa,
Pennsylvania, the steel mill left in the '80s. It's
basically a ghost town, high crime because people cannot get
jobs, and that's one of the things that we got to look at.
Thank you for letting me speak.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Jeffers. Appreciate
it. Just a follow-up on that, you know, some people think,
well, you know, trade is going to result in some job losses,
but it results in some job gains. I mean, in the communities
that you all work in, what's your experience with that? I
mean, can people just leave and move to another area where a
job is going to be created to trade, or what's your
experience, both you, Mr. Jeffers, and anyone else who would
like to address that, and I've got a long list of folks who
want to speak, but that's one thing I'd like to hear about.

MR. JEFFERS: Yes, I moved from my job, okay? My
family still lives in Pennsylvania. I moved down south for
my job, okay. I'm lucky I wasn't married, but my kids still
live up in Pennsylvania, but when you have a family, it's
hard to move for a job. Even though the money might be good,
your main base is in Pennsylvania or Detroit or wherever it
may be, okay, and your whole family is there, it's tough
moving to a new place. Maybe when you're younger, maybe in
your 20s, that's good, but when you're in your 50s and 60s
and later on in life, it's tough, it's a tough job.

Like I said, not only moving for jobs, who wants to
hire a 50-plus-year-old for a job? So you're not going to
really move too much.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. And Mr. Storino touched
on age issues as well, and I hope we can talk a little bit
more about that later as well, but I want to make sure
everyone has a chance to speak here.

Mr. O'Connell?

MR. O'CONNELL: I think that the trade impact on
communities, whether underserved or not underserved, has
twofold nuance here. When we look at trade impact for
companies that are leaving the United States, that are
withdrawing from communities, this creates vulnerable impacts
on these communities. These jobs are going out of the
community. That's displacing workers, that's affecting
education within the region because it affects the funding
that that county is receiving, that impacts the infrastructure that that region is receiving, and infrastructure is absolutely vital even when it comes to trade to giving access to new routes within the United States.

On the flip side of that, investments within Michigan, specifically Michigan, but the nation as a whole, absolutely help communities. We've had investments of 44.1 million in Auburn Hills, 14 million in Dundee, as well as 57 million in Ann Arbor. This is creating jobs for individuals in the manufacturing sector that are going to make growth, help the communities grow. More funds for the county as a whole, for the city as a whole, and create more downline mom-and-pop shops, diners. These individuals are going to have a disposable income that they can go out and reinvest into their community, not only into their community but in their children as well.

CHAIR KEARNS: And, Mr. O'Connell, the investments you're talking about, does trade contribute to those investments?

MR. O'CONNELL: Yes, these are direct foreign investments from TUVSUD for 44.1 million in Auburn Hills for the state-of-the-art EV battery testing facility, Taiwan-based EOI investing 14 million in Dundee with the creation of 195 new jobs, and for the Ann Arbor facility
that's creating 160 high wage jobs as well.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, great, thank you. And do you know anything about exports from -- you're talking about investments from foreign companies, and that's an important part of this. Do you know anything about exports with that side of things?

MR. O'CONNELL: Unfortunately, I don't have the specifics on exports, but Michigan is the automotive central of the United States, guaranteed that we have a lot of exports going to different regions around the U.S., which all -- not only the U.S. but the world as a whole, which is creating jobs everywhere.

CHAIR KEARNS: And I should remember this from my former career I had, but I believe the U.S. auto industry is a major exporter, and I guess that's Michigan we're talking about.

MR. O'CONNELL: Yes.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you.

Next up is Ms. Brown Maxey, please.

MS. BROWN-MAXEY: Yes, I'm going to piggyback on what he's saying. These communities that he is speaking about are communities that are beginning to thrive and are taking advantage and have skilled trades and have people who are educated and have technology and have the education.

We're talking about underserved communities, and
from conception to high school, these underserved communities get a raw deal from the very beginning, start 50 miles behind from the very beginning, from prenatal care to hospitalization, to the medicines that they need, to the programs that they need to nurture their infants, their children.

Preschool, and you mentioned babysitting and things like this. For underserved communities, this is a reality that these communities start behind from the very beginning. And these small communities that happen to be working, a lot of them are working by independent workers. They have their self-made people, the mom-and-pop shops, and these mom-and-pop shops are being affected by the bigger companies and corporations. And as they fall because of trade, so does the small mom-and-pops.

So the underserved communities have a bigger problem that happens even before we start talking about trade. So understand trade is just another layer to it. But the underserved communities, what you need to do is you need to deal with the underserved communities and giving them an equal playing field, because Ann Arbor and Dundee is not the neighborhood I grew up in, and we start from the very beginning behind the ball.

So there are a lot of good programs that's out here and that are coming, but the reality is it's not coming fast
enough because the education in Detroit is not the same type of education that you get in West Bloomfield. And the truth of the matter is, if you want to even the playing field, if you're in the fifth grade in Detroit, you should be getting the same education as fifth grade in West Bloomfield, as well as learning technology and getting skills as well.

Then we can talk about trade, because that's just adding another layer on top of the layers that the people of underserved communities are already dealing with.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much.

Next up is Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Hello. I'm hoping it was this Johnson, that there's not another. There may be another Johnson on there.

CHAIR KEARNS: It is, yes.

MR. JOHNSON: Okay, perfect. Good. So my name's Chad Johnson, and I am the President of a company called The Akana Group, and I want to -- I'm going to change up kind of the narrative here a little bit that everybody's talking about because you're talking about steel and UAW and manufacturing.

We are the largest indigenous-owned equipment provider in North America. We also run a series of distribution centers for ag, indigenous ag products that are a result of those machines that are used for ag production.
Specifically, the trade -- and I'm going to talk on two different countries, Canada and Australia, USMCA Article 3, specifically as it relates to Canada, the Jane Treaty as it relates to Canada, and how the first nations are allowed to move traditional foods back into the United States at a different manner than we can north. So things like antidumping/countervailing duties on softwood lumber, not applicable to first nations moving products back and forth, right?

So there's ways -- I think it was mentioned earlier some things that are, I don't want to say loopholes, but where I am looking at specifically is the indigenous food trade, indigenous product trades that are moving back and forth, that a job loss that was mentioned about inside of a community -- well, if you've been out to a reservation, a job loss requires you to leave another country, right?

Things that you talked about, education, healthcare, if a job leaves that reservation, where do they go? They actually have to leave that entire community and go somewhere else. I was speaking -- I was actually at Gulfood in Dubai a month ago, and I was talking to a mill that is in southeast Michigan -- how about just north of Toledo I'll say on the Michigan side, and we were looking to mill some products there specifically, and we were competing with products coming in from Canada, and they were
indigenous-to-indigenous. One of the problems is those products, even though they were trading since the beginning of time, rice, for example, wild rice there in Michigan, they're not included there.

They're also not included in the U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement either, right? A lot of those HTS codes that we want to move back and forth, even though they existed before the U.S. existed, don't exist. So I just wanted to throw that out there just because everybody was talking about whatever, and I just want to have a different discussion.

We have 12 tribes in that state specifically, right, and they do a variety of different things. Some assemble, some manufacture. A lot has to do with agriculture. And so, if you look at some of the trade agreements where, if they are going to continue that traditional ways of food, food sovereignty, things like that, of feeding their people, and also trading across borders, there's some dynamics that are a little bit different even in first nations, in Canada, or the aboriginals in Australia or in New Zealand that we don't see here in the U.S.

So I just wanted to bring that out as just a little different element than what everybody else was talking about, the UAW and the steelworkers and the unions in that regard. And I think you mentioned Latashia that was going to be on here. I think she was supposed to be on here too from the
Intertribal Ag Council, but we do work with them quite
exclusively as -- anyway, I will default from that and yield
my time. How's that?

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you, Mr. Johnson. Very
interesting. I've been doing trade for a really long time,
and I have a lot to learn about those sorts of issues with
Native Americans. I wasn't aware of those sorts of
relationships with other countries.

Next up, we have Ms. Hunter.

MS. HUNTER: Thank you. I just want to piggyback
on what you asked the young gentleman about relocation.
What's going on here with us, we only have one U.S. steel
plant here, which is my plant, but there's other U.S. steel
places, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and different areas.

The problem a lot of times with relocation is their
spouse's job is here. So, if I'm a steelworker or a UAW
worker somewhere else, but I'm a teacher and I have only six
more years to go to retire, or I'm a nurse and I have only
five more years to retire, that spouse, male or female, it's
hard for that family to pick up and leave, okay?

We here in Michigan have what they call cities of
school choice. So, if you live in that city for so many
years, those kids go to school free. They go to college or
secondary free. So I'm starting. I'm a sophomore. In that
sense, I've only got two more years to go, like in Canton,
then I can go to the college free, but I have to pick up and
move. That'll cost that family tuition college money while I
moved to this community because this community had this
promise, okay? So it's very hard for families as a family to
pick up and leave economically and also messing with
someone's pension and retirement as a spouse.

The other thing I want to talk about, when you talk
about the jobs and our bills and stuff, please understand,
and I know everybody knows Michigan, I believe, is -- quote
me if I'm wrong -- is the second highest state in the union
when it comes to car insurance.

So a lot of young people and families don't have
transportation. So, if you live in the bigger cities, you
have bus transportation to get back and forth to work. If
you're here, to even start a job, to buy a car, you can't
even get out to Arbor Hills and different things because our
transportation system here for suburban places for young
people or, you know, people of color or poorer people to
elevate themselves into a higher-paying job.

Another thing is a lot of these manufacturing jobs
is being created. For example, my people had a certain
amount of money. I'll be honest, here, my -- which is a
labor grade work pay, makes $25 an hour, okay? So their
house note is based on $25 an hour. Their car note is based
on $25. Then they go to the auto industry that are starting
people off at 16, 17, so now they're making a $9 pay cut, which makes them end up losing their homes and losing their cars and things.

So manufacturing jobs that's not equitable in what you were making or doing something you were making, creating manufacturing jobs at not a sort of scale of pay, and we all understand now what's happening with inflation, now the highest rate of inflation we have seen in my 54 years of existence, that makes a difference. So creation of jobs is not economically feasible to maintain someone's lifestyle as it's directly affected by the trade also. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Ms. Hunter. So I heard two things that I want to follow up a little bit on there. One is what I heard you say and also Ms. Brown Maxey say is it sounds like, first of all, jobs are being lost due to trade in one community. They may be being created in another community, but you may not be able to access those jobs. The jobs that are lost might be in an underserved community, a black community. The jobs that are being created are not, they're in a different community, and there aren't the resources and the education to take advantage of that job. That's what we heard from Ms. Brown Maxey.

And then what you're saying too is -- and you may not just be able to -- you may not even have a car to get to the job in the new community. So I'd love to hear a little
bit more about if you have any other further thoughts on that.

And then also, you pointed out that a lot of times you've got maybe a married couple, and one side of that equation might get a new job someplace else, but what about the spouse who is the teacher or so forth, how does that spouse move. You sort of said, you know, male, female, it affects everybody the same, but I'm wondering if we have any further thoughts on that? I mean, we've had in a different roundtable discussion somebody point out that a lot of times it's harder for women to relocate because of their children and so forth.

MS. HUNTER: Yes. Yes. So a person like me, I have a special needs child. So you have an autistic child, a child with cerebral palsy, you have a child with things. You've had the resources here, the family here to help you get that kid back and forth. You relocate to total strangers. You don't know that community.

So how do you get back with your children, the daycare with your children, and it's very hard now because, if you're in some jobs that have -- and this is what people really don't understand -- back years ago, there were 24-hour daycares. They no longer exist. So, if you're working midnights, you're working afternoons, the off-shifts that a lot of jobs do, how do you have daycare? You do not.
So you rely on your family and the people you know. So, now when you relocate, that goes away. And still you might -- most people that's new to a job work off-shifts. You're going to get the afternoons. You're going to get the midnights. So that resource is gone.

Now that's why younger people don't even have cars, because they cannot economically afford it. They do the Uber and they do the car share because they cannot afford -- for example, my daughter is at Michigan State University. She is 23 years old. To put her on my insurance is an extra $476 a month. How can some people afford that when they can't even afford the transportation to go to the job?

One thing my brother, I love that he pointed out, is that the different things that's happening to a family mentally. Domestic violence is on the rise because of loss of jobs. I have people come in my office that I knew for years. I have 28 years, going on 28 years here. I didn't know what they was going through at home.

And please do not -- it was a shame and shock to me -- please don't think that women are the only ones that goes through domestic violence victims. Some men are domestic violence victims also, okay? So it's a lot of things that's internal. Mental health of the children, when the parents are not getting along, parents now fight, we have an increase in suicides, like he said, children, because they're affected.
by what's happening in the nuclear family. They're being affected.

So, yes, transportation to those places, education, because I'll say, for example, here, I was raising my cousin, a 10th grader in high school, and at that time, my oldest was a 6th grader. They had the exact same book. How could that be? Four grades different in the same American history book. So the resources are not just black. Brown, Detroit has a lot of Hispanics. We have one of the biggest Arabic communities here, so that's a language barrier.

So, when you have people who do not have the access to the education because the school system has poor people, which makes poor resources for those children, how do they -- as an electrician by trade, I really hammer, hammer, hammer trades.

But yet we don't even have resources good here in Michigan to send people who, you know, do not have money to trade school, because where are our bricklayers? We have -- I always argue this. We have an infrastructure bill, thank you, thank you, but where are your masons coming from? Where are your bricklayers coming from, your electricians? Where are these people coming from if they can't afford trade schools?

So the trade industry should also affect education to get trade people into these positions. So, yes, it's
all-encompassing. And, yes, trade is the bigger effect because, if I lost my job making this rate, now all my resources are gone. The house -- now here's my credit gone because I've lost my house. Here's my car go.

So then, when I do get a manufacturing job somewhere else that I'm making eight or nine, $10 less, how do I build my credit up when it's already bad because I've lost this to obtain another house, to obtain another car? It's a domino effect.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Ms. Hunter, that's very helpful. That's one of the things that economists are just starting to kind of understand, is we talk about frictions, you know, how hard is it to move from this job to the other, because I think our economic models start off with the assumption, well, you know, you lose this job here and you create that job there and, you know, lickety-split we're back in business. And you provided some real good examples of how, you know, very specifics facts of why that doesn't always work, so I appreciate that.

Mr. Preuss? Is that right? Preuss?

MR. PREUSS: Yeah.

CHAIR KEARNS: Please go ahead.

MR. PREUSS: Like Dr. Seuss. Thank you, and thank you for hosting this and including us in this discussion. I'd definitely like to agree with a lot of the comments that
my sisters and brothers had made previously. I just want to
add a few things that hasn't been kind of touched on yet.

You know, I'm a business agent for the
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the IBEW,
Local 58 here in Detroit, and the manufacturing side
absolutely has been decimated in the City of Detroit, and
IBEW manufacturing has been adversely affected more than
maybe some of the other industries that we have locally.

I think, if you look at the way that tax abatements
are used and misused to both attract -- I hear, you know,
we've been attracting business, but, at the same rate, if not
even more, we've lost a lot of businesses to other places.

And what happens is -- and I heard Sister Dorethea
say this earlier, is that, you know, they use this; they
weaponize tax abatements. So companies can threaten to move
to different locations because Kentucky will give Ford a tax
abatement, you know? Ford will get a great tax abatement if
they move down to, you know, this nice little, you know,
area, or they'll move it to Mexico, you know? They'll
threaten, hey, we'll move down to Mexico.

I know the University of Michigan, Dr. Zullo had made
and put together a report on how many of those manufacturing
jobs, how many other people downstream are affected. I think
there's for every one job lost in auto manufacturing, 30
other people are affected by that loss in job. That goes to
our steel mills, you know, with Sister Hunter that's talking about how many job losses that happened in Del Ray and all the associated businesses that, you know, were there to support those people that used to go there.

And I think, you know, we're seeing how the weaponization has happened with these tax abatements that have, I think, given companies and unfair advantage to leave or to go to other places, threaten to lower wages to stay competitive. That's the whole thing. We've got to stay competitive. We've got to stay competitive. That means that they're not making enough money. They need to make more money.

You know, it used to be that a CEO was within, I don't know, five times or 10 times their highest-paid employee. Now it's, you know, 300 times or 400 times. And, you know, it's just how much money can we extract on the backs of working people. There's just really no end to the way this economy is going and the way that corporations have been left unchecked.

And I know we're talking about trade, but I think it all works together. When they put, you know, these incentives together and they incentivize companies to become more profitable at the expense of people, it diminishes urban communities more adversely than anywhere else.

And Detroit is no exception. Detroit is the
poorest major city in the country, 40 percent poverty in the City of Detroit specifically, and the City of Detroit, every single development that you see is being subsidized by poor people for wealthy millionaires and billionaires to make more money on the land that's in the City of Detroit, the land that's owned by the citizens, not the City of Detroit, that's being given incentivized to major corporations coming in under the guise of "We'll create jobs."

So, you know, there really has to be, you know, the investment into our schools that we used to have. You know, Detroit used to have one of the wealthiest and best school systems in the country. Education leads to opportunities. The minute that you saw the disinvestment in schools, companies didn't have to pay taxes -- there's many companies that don't pay any taxes at all. There's no investment into the school systems, which leads to people that don't have the education necessary.

It's easier to educate when they're in grade school and high school. To try to do it post-secondary, to try to teach somebody how to read after they've already graduated -- and, yeah, in the State of Michigan, they allow people to graduate from high school that cannot read. It's a fact in the City of Detroit. The ACLU had filed suit against the State of Michigan because kids do not know how to read.

And, you know, what it does is now you're building
a pipeline from -- the prison pipeline, right? They know how
many prison cells that they need -- they know how many beds
they need based on the literacy rate of a third grader. That
was, you know, a report, you know, most of my union brothers
and sisters here have gone to the You Can class that we've
learned this.

We know. We understand the metrics by which they
measure how many prisons that we need based on literacy rate.
Well, it sounds like we know the answer, how to fix the
problem. There's so many things that get lost because we
just talk about the profits for the millionaires. And, you
know, it just gets lost because we think that that's some
type of, you know, pride that we get to have that we get to
say, okay, yeah, we have all these companies making all this
money, you know, we're the wealthiest country in the world.

But it's how you treat the poor people and how you
treat the underutilized and underrepresented people. That's
how you're going to be measured by. Not the wealth of the
rich but the poverty of the poor is how this country's going
to be measured by.

And that's not to say that we have -- we have a
fixable system. We have something that can be fixed. We
have something that we need to address. I'm glad you're
having this forum. I have a lot more information to give
you, but I don't want to take up too much more time. Thank
CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Preuss, that's very helpful.

Mr. Milberger -- sorry, Dr. Milberger.

DR. MILBERGER: Thank you. My name is Sharon Milberger. I'm the Director of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University, and we are the University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities for the State of Michigan.

I just want to thank you for including me in this event, and, you know, I think all the comments have been made and some of the concerns that have been raised, the human impact on trade and employment is that much greater for people with disabilities. They really experience significant barriers, and I just want to plant a seed as we're having this conversation that to think of people with disabilities as part of that conversation around diversity, equity, and inclusion, because a lot of times that doesn't come up when that conversation happens. So I'd just ask us to be thinking about people with disabilities in that way.

And for people with disabilities, in Michigan -- this -- I don't know, this may not be the most recent statistic, but in 2017, only 9 percent of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities were in competitive, integrated employment. And we know that there
are a lot of people with disabilities that would like to be employed that are not employed. And then, of course, with COVID, that impacts everything as well.

And also for people with disabilities, they are subject to sub-minimum-wage environments and sheltered workshops, so there are some really fundamental things that we need to address. And, you know, I heard a lot of talk about education. So you can imagine, you know, kids with disabilities don't always get the same opportunities, whether internships or just classes that they're in that set them up well for employment when they finish school.

And then I also wanted to just mention, it was mentioned before, this issue of childcare, but I also want to point out that there is a direct support professional shortage, a crisis, in this country, so people who help support people with disabilities, older adults as well, and direct support professionals can be very helpful for someone with a disability, that they may need some support in order to be able to work.

And also, for caregivers -- and this came up with a parent who mentioned this before, the difficulties in moving -- that if you don't have the supports that you need, it can impact if you're able to be in the workforce. So I wanted to highlight some of those points that have been made with a lens of disability. So thank you for including me.
CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Milberger, and we had another roundtable where we focused much more on disability issues as well, and so that's definitely something we're going to be looking into much more going forward.

Mr. Aaron? I'm sorry, Ms. Aaron.

MS. AARON: Ms. Aaron, yes. Hi, everyone. My name is Mikyia Aaron. I serve as General Counsel as well as the External Business Affairs Director for the Laborers' Local 1191 here in Detroit. And I've listened to a lot of the comments that have made, and I echo a lot of those same sentiments, right?

If you're in the building trades, which are your pipefitters, your laborers, your electrical workers, your steelworkers, your bricklayers, those people, our trade is being bombarded with job opportunities that we can't fill because of the lack of training and ready and skilled people prepared to go into the field.

We can look at the multitude of ways that the education structure has impacted trade, how care for children will impact trade, how local businesses impact trade, but I think the bigger thing is is that one sector of labor or the trades has an influx of work, and that right now is the building trades. We have an influx of work, not enough workers prepared to go to work because they're not skilled, trained, and ready to go.
And then you have the manufacturing industry, which some people will claim that it's a dying industry because things will be automated and before you know it robots will be making vehicles and people won't.

And so I think, as you juggle everything, the one thing that is a constant is education. I think we can all agree that education is important, and I think education opens your mind to what's out there. The reality is the school systems push children to colleges, which education, as you know, a lot of people in the education field feel like it's a dying industry, education.

The bigger thing is kids have to know the opportunities available to them well before they get to choose where they want to go in life. And so just as much as college education should be something that children are taught exists, there are trade unions that are also available that have opportunities for viable employment.

And the reality is people look at the trades as a second guess or a second step, meaning if you don't go to college, you can join a trade, where you can have just as viable a career in the trades that you could have with a college education.

And I know a lot of tradesmen who make well over $100,000 a year with no student debt, and I know a lot of people with student debt who don't make that kind of money.
So I think educating our children on the opportunities available will create jobs in the future.

The reality is I get a pension when I decide to stop working, but my pension is only as viable as the number of young people working to keep my pension going when it's time for me to retire, and that's the reality. The reality is we have to keep this cycle going.

How we do that is we engage our youth to explain to them the opportunities available to them so that they have a working knowledge of every field available to them upon graduation to decide where they want to go and not look at the trades or the manufacturing industry as an afterthought, where you bring your kid down to the local union by his ears to tell him to get a job because he can't sit on your couch and he's not interested in going to college.

We have to change that mindset if we want to keep all our industries booming. Our industries will only boom with young people coming in, apprentices coming in getting that necessary training. And a lot of people say, hey, well, how do I pay for trade school? Well, you join a local union, you get a job, and your employer will pay for you to get that training. But you don't know that unless you have that information and knowledge.

So I think the bigger thing is how do we spread that information so that people know what's out there and
available for them, and I think that that's something that we should find a way to shift the conversation to the next generation because those people will need to come into our fields to work for us to have viable pension opportunities. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. And something you said that we've heard before, I mean, we hear a lot about community colleges and apprenticeship programs, but I think what Ms. Brown Maxey and others have been saying is, really, you need to have a basic education first, it sounds like, before we can get to that, and we have real issues with elementary school education and so forth, and so you can't just kind of fix it at that last step.

And I think what I'm also hearing from you, Ms. Aaron, is that people need to know their opportunities early on in their lives in order to kind of choose different paths down the road, I guess. So thank you.

Next up is Dr. Robinson.

DR. ROBINSON: Yes, hello, and thank you for doing this. I think this has been a great discussion so far. I am the President of Huron Valley Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. So we're a central labor council or an ALF depending on the terminology that represents four counties, including Washtenaw County, where Ann Arbor and University of Michigan are located or at least that branch -- there's an Ann Arbor
campus, of course, in Deerborne and in Flint as well.

I also helped organize the union of
non-tenure-track faculty at the University of Michigan Leo,
which is part of AFT Michigan. So I think we've heard a lot
of really compelling, you know, facts about what trade policy
as pursued in the last few decades has meant for the
manufacturing sector and some also about the building trades.

There's a huge sector of our economy, of course,
that is represented by services, including educational
services of the kind that members of my union provide in
higher ed and in K-12, and I think it might be helpful to try
to connect how does that relate to trade policy or does it,
because a lot of trade policy discussion gets conducted as
though, essentially, the core of what it's about is the
manufacturing sector, and everything else, everybody who's in
any other sector is basically immune from the impacts that
trade has on our manufacturing sector as an employee and is a
beneficiary as a consumer of the lower prices that freer
trade is supposed to bring about.

I think that's a very mistaken view, though. I
mean, part of it's already been made clear because, when a
factory closes or dramatically loses a large chunk of its
workforce -- or here's another alternative that hasn't been
emphasized as much, when the wages go down either because
wages are bargained down by international competition and the
employer says, okay, we're going to leave unless we have concessions in these areas, unless you introduce two tiers or three tiers so that your next generation of workers is paid a whole lot less than the current generation of workers, the thing that was at the heart of the Kellogg strike not too long ago.

You know, that kind of bargaining is happening all the time. If the UAW in its collective negotiations wasn't having to worry about another plant going and relocating to Mexico, it would be able to bargain higher wages for its members. It would be able to get rid of the two-tier system.

But, when your top priority in the UAW has to be we need to keep the plants here, if we don't have the plants here for our members, it doesn't matter what wage they're getting paid because it's zero, you know?

And what the kind of trade agreements we've been signing in recent years have done that makes them different from the sort of trade agreements that we had up to the 1980s is they've greatly increased international capital mobility. They've made it much easier for the auto companies and the steel companies, the entire electronics sector of this country, the entire power sector, to go to another country, set up shop free from worries about tax, you know, expropriation or the other things that used to scare firms about locating in other countries and export back here
without any impediments in terms of tariffs or quotas or other such things.

So what we've done is we've unilaterally dramatically increased the mobility of capital, investors, companies, whatever you want to call them, corporations, while the mobility of labor workers and their unions and government has remained unchanged. And what that has done is radically changed the balance of power between corporate America on the one hand and both workers and their governments, democratic governments, on the other hand in the bargaining relationships that we have.

And so that's why, to go back to what Brother Preuss was saying, we have this race to the bottom bargaining of tax abatements and tax concessions. Now you can have that even if we were a closed economy. You could have states in bidding wars against each other to supply subsidies and tax breaks to companies to attract them. That's about capital mobility too, but that's within the nation.

If you exacerbate that by dramatically increasing international capital mobility, then that race to the bottom gets worse. That pressure to bid down our taxes -- and not just taxes, but to change our laws to make them more attractive to corporate investors, whether they're U.S. or foreign, then you're in a situation where the government's capacity to act on behalf of the majority of the people who
are, after all, wage and salary workers is reduced because, more and more, they're dancing to the tune of whatever it is that they think is required in order to attract and retain corporate investment.

A lot of the bifurcation of productivity growth -- if you look at a graph that shows the trends in productivity growth from 1945 to the present and the trends in the growth of the real median wage, you can see this from the Economic Policy Institute or any number of other people that have made this graph widely available, you see the two tracking each other extremely closely from '45 up to about the middle of '70s, and then they diverge and they just keep diverging.

Somehow we changed our economy in fundamental ways in the 1970s and then just kept building on that in the '80s and the '90s such that we no longer see the majority of people benefit from the productivity growth that our economy enjoys. And so, basically, trade is often argued that it will improve productivity, it'll improve efficiency, specialization. What is the point of that if all of the gains from productivity improvements and efficiency improvements go to a very small group of people at the top of the economy?

We need to really rethink how our trade policy works. That's a question you're going to deal with later, and I'll have more to say about that when we get to that
point, but I just want to say now this fundamental change in the relative power of capital vis-a-vis governments and workers is at the heart of what trade policy does that has set us on the disastrous course we've been on for the last 40 years of ever-growing economic polarization and weakening unions.

And on the weakening unions point, this is how we get from a sector like manufacturing to the entire economy, because as the unions have weakened -- and Michigan is a wonderful example of this -- because we were a manufacturing state, we were one of the leading manufacturing states, and because our manufacturing sector was highly organized -- UAW alone represented half of all organized workers in this state, but it wasn't alone. We had a very high level of union organization in Michigan into the 1960s. We probably had close to 50 percent union density in the state.

We're at 15 percent union density in the state now, and that's taking the public sector into account. If we are only in the private sector, it's lower than that. What does that mean? From a political economy point of view, it means that organized labor backs political parties that support a strong government that pursues policies that benefit working people. A high level of investment in public education, K-12, and higher education. Why are we now -- why are my students all graduating with $30,000 of debt at least?
Because we're not funding public higher education the way we used to.

Why aren't we doing that? Because the priorities in Lansing have changed. Why have the priorities changed? Because the capacity of the labor movement to support politicians not only in the Democratic party but in the Republican party who support a strong public sector that pursues policies that benefit all of us, all of us working people, has been greatly reduced.

Now we have a government that, instead of passing policies that helps working people, the state government under the previous administration passed laws that prevent local governments like the ones that I work with in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County from passing a higher minimum wage than the state minimum. They pass preemptive laws to prevent that.

They pass laws to prevent teachers from bargaining class sizes as part of their collective bargaining so that teachers can no longer defend the quality of education in their classes. Of course, they pass budgets that don't have enough resources for students, and that's particularly bad for students in the urban and rural areas, where the tax base is weak compared with the suburbs.

So I could go on and on, but I think the key point here is trade policy doesn't just hit manufacturing. It hits
the entire economy. It hits the entire economy because of the way it changes the balance of power among these key actors in a capitalist economy, and particularly in undermining the labor movement, it changes the balance of power between forces within our political society that want a minimalist state, that want to cut back on regulations that protect workers, that want to cut back on redistribution, that want to cut back on public programs, and instead puts in power people who want to do just the opposite of all those things. And, cumulatively, those have done enormous damage to working people in this state and in this country.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Dr. Robinson. One thing that you touched on, you were talking about -- you and Mr. Preuss, I think, were talking about tax incentives moved elsewhere and Kentucky versus Mexico, and I think you kind of touched on this, but one thing I heard from that is, I mean, one difference between Kentucky versus Mexico is, to some extent at least, Kentucky is under the same regulations as Michigan but Mexico maybe less so when it comes to labor standards or environmental standards and so forth, and so it's a different set of competition standards there as well.

There were a couple things that you touched on that maybe after we take a break I would like to talk more about with you all, and one is you all are talking a lot about manufacturing. You know, even you, Dr. Robinson, who's not
in manufacturing, recognizes that, you know, your job still depends on it.

I'd like to talk after the break about why manufacturing is so important. I mean, my sense of it is that a key reason at least is, when it comes to manufacturing, manufacturing tends to have a lot of jobs in one location, whereas maybe services are more spread out.

But anyway, I'd like to hear from all of the folks on the panel more about why manufacturing is so important. I'd also like to hear more about why -- or what the relationship is between unions and minorities, racial minorities. I think there's a lot of crosswinds there, I guess, about understanding -- you know, I was speaking to somebody this morning about the role the United Auto Workers played in the civil rights movement in the Michigan area and the Detroit area, so I'd like to hear more about that.

There's also, I think, others who sort of point out that unions haven't always been the most accepting of minorities, and so, if we could have a little bit more of a conversation on that, I think that'd be helpful. But, before we go to the break, and Ms. Brown Maxey will be the first one to speak after our break, but I wanted to hear from Mr. DePaoli -- I'm sorry if I'm not saying your name very well -- but I know you're the last in line before we take a short break.
MR. DEPAOLI: Thank you. Yes, it's Mark DePaoli, again, UAW Local 600. Tough act to follow there from Dr. Robinson, very great points, but I wanted to piggyback on I know Sister Hunter and Ms. Aaron and my brother from the IBEW were speaking on skilled trades, so I just wanted to chime in. I'm a tool and dye maker by trade myself, and I work at the Ford Deerborne tool and dye plant, which is the only Ford tool and dye plant in North America. And for those that don't know what a tool and dye plant does, I'll just give a very brief description.

We build the tooling that would then go into a press, and you put a flat sheet of metal in, and you stamp it, and then out comes your car parts, such as your hoods, your fenders, along with your structural parts, your pillars and things like that.

So, based on that, being the only tool and dye shop in North America for Ford, we could not build all of the dyes for a single vehicle because they're all due at the same time. So, along with us, there was also several non-Ford tool and dye shops throughout Michigan, everywhere throughout Michigan, along with Ohio, Indiana, and as you get into the late '90s and early 2000s, as they started sourcing dye work to China, we saw a lot of the surrounding dye shops close that were around here, along with our tool and dye shop shrinking dramatically.
When I started there in '96, we were slightly over 500 tool and dye makers in that plant, and now they are just over 200. Now technology plays a little bit of a role in that too, but the big portion is we lost all of the structural metal and things like that, so the parts that you won't see on a car, we lost all that work to China.

And now our plant has basically become like a niche plant where we do all your Class A services, all your hoods, all the parts that you're going to see coming down the road, your hoods, your fenders, your doors. And, to me, that's a direct impact on our trade laws. So I just wanted to piggyback on the skilled trade portion of that since I've dealt with it firsthand. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, great. Thank you.

So we'll take maybe a 10-minute break, reconvene at 2:40. We'll start with Ms. Brown Maxey, and in addition too, I want to hear more about the role of manufacturing in the Michigan economy, more about unions and racial minorities and kind of what that relationship is like, and manufacturing and minorities and kind of tell us more about that, again, some of this kind of context to help us understand what kind of impact trade has on the economy.

I'd also like to hear about, you mentioned, Mr. DePaoli, technology, and I'd like to talk about people's thoughts on to what extent it is technology versus trade and
to what extent those things are actually more linked than people may realize. So we'll start there, and I note Mr. Nevshehir also has his placard up, so we'll go with him after Brown Maxey, and we'll start again at 2:40. Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

CHAIR KEARNS: All right. Let's start up the conversation again. We're going to begin with Ms. Brown-Maxey.

MS. BROWN-MAXEY: Thank you. I just wanted to piggyback on what was said earlier about the chart, the economic chart that the gentleman was talking about, who represents AFT in Ann Arbor.

Another dynamic about that chart as you look at it from the '60s and when it starts going down, something that jumps out at you immediately is the decline of unions. As union density dissipated, so did income, and that is not by no design. That is a direct result of what is going on.

When we talk about trade and all these trade deals and everything like that, one of the reasons why corporations do get involved with the global economy is because of that very fact. The worst thing perhaps that has happened that have definitely changed our dynamics is the policies of NAFTA, China into the World Trade Organization, CAFTA, and the career relationship.
If you look at all of that, companies have taken advantage of that situation, and one of the things that you will see is that a lot of these countries do not have unions. A lot of these workers do not have rights, they don't have a say, they don't have safety and protection, and the truth be told, a lot of them get paid pennies compared to what the United States workers are paid.

I work for Communication -- I am a member of the Communication Workers of America, and a lot of our call center workers here have lost jobs by the thousands. Do you know why? Because the company has gotten together with a third party and have taken the call center jobs to the Philippines, and this is why, when you call and you ask for service, after you get through with the automation, you have a foreigner on the other line, and that foreigner is probably being paid 100 -- I mean $1.25 or $2 an hour for their services.

And these are the type of things that American corporations are doing to hurt the American economy and to hurt working people because, by becoming global, they realize that they can get other countries to do our jobs for a lot less, and they're taking advantage of that.

And so I just wanted to clarify that because, as she said, we're going to talk about that a little later, we're going to get deeper into that. But just understand
that a lot of what's happening in terms of international and national trade has a lot to do with the depletion of unions because the unions -- the reason why they was formed is the very problem that is happening now.

And, fortunately, unions are beginning to get a little bit stronger because people are realizing that they are people, and who in the world decided that corporations were people. Come on folks.

And I'm going to end it right there because we can continue this when you come up with the other conversations.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you. And we've had a number of other people who want to speak, but maybe on that subject, if anyone has any direct experience of situations in which maybe you were in a collective bargaining agreement negotiation, and the threat of, you know, jobs were going overseas impacted those negotiations, or, like Ms. Brown-Maxey was focusing on, if it had any impact on any decisions that you know of, you, your family members, about whether or not to unionize. I'd be curious whether or not anyone has actually seen that happen. We hear about that happening, but, you know, in my job, I don't hear about that directly very often.

So, Mr. DePaoli, your hand's up.

MR. DEPAOLI: Yes, as it relates to that question, and Dr. Robinson hit the nail on the head too. In the UAW,
you know, for years now, we've had to do this balancing act of, you know, trying to get wage gains and things like that to keep up with the cost of living for our members while trying to keep the company from, you know, moving plants to Mexico and things like that.

You know, over the years, it's forced us into a two- and even a three-tier wage system where we have people doing the same jobs making $16 an hour as people who are doing the same jobs making $30 an hour and people not getting the same benefits as the person they're working next to when it comes to healthcare and things like that, and that's been the case, you know, over the last, you know, 20, 30 years at the negotiating table, you know, every single session.

So, yeah, to answer that, yes, definitely in the UAW we have felt that very much.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you.

We'll turn next to Mr. Preuss.

MR. PREUSS: I didn't have a comment directly with -- mine was going to be more general.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's fine. I'm sorry, we are moving on. I know you had your hand up for a while now.

MR. PREUSS: Okay, yes, thank you. Thank you for recognizing me. I just wanted to kind of address some of the questions that you kind of gave us a little bit of food for thought before our break and talking about minorities in the
trades, and here's a few statistics that I think you would find useful and edifying, is that 93 percent of minorities in construction trades, but specifically I'm going to use the IBEW because that's who I represent, so 93 percent of women and minorities that you'll see on construction sites are union.

So, you know, you said, you know, the trades, you know, how well did we do with, you know, being inclusive. I think that it's a much longer discussion that we have to have, but to kind of, like, really simplify where we're at right now, you know, instead of trying to, you know, kind of understand -- we could go to -- if you give me enough time, I could give you a little bit better background.

The IBEW was founded, you know, basically because of trying to safeguard our members from being killed. You know, half of all of our members would die within the first two years. The electrical industry was very hazardous. It was the number one hazardous occupation in the country at that time, and not to, you know, compete with other hazardous occupations, I don't want to get into that debate, but, you know, we're going 130 years later and we're still the number six most dangerous occupation.

You know, the safety that we have instilled was based on blood, sweat, and tears, and, you know, people had to die before we were able to get, you know, regulation in
place to safeguard our members and people in the industry.

And what happens is you build a culture, right, that, you know -- and this even goes back even further before the IBEW was founded. I mean, you were whatever your father was. You know, if your father was a carpenter, you became a carpenter, and that was just kind of the hereditary, you know, you're going to, you know, pass along all of those skills.

Well, still that culture exists, existed well up until, you know, there was lawsuits had to be filed and people had to comply with being more inclusive. And now, you know, we're using an old paradigm to measure the successes that the unions have had within the last 30 years. The unions have made great strides to be in a very inclusive operation and not to mention the benefits that we brought to, you know, minorities and people of color to say hello to the middle class and build in the middle class the contributions that we have.

But I just want -- I don't want it to be lost on this conversation at all that, you know, we're looking at -- you go to a jobsite, and if you see minorities on a jobsite, they aren't going to be union by far and large. Like I said, 93 percent in IBEW. I don't know what the statistic is for other unions, but I'm sure it's going to be very similar and inclusive in diversity and outreach.
So I don't want us to be stuck on an old paradigm that does not exist anymore. As you had heard earlier there with Ms. Aaron from Laborers, you know, we're all looking for people right now, and it doesn't matter. We're just looking for good people.

What, you know, Dorethea was talking about before about with the school system, the decimation of these schools not being able to even have the resources to give children the baseline education that's necessary to go into the trades.

You couple that with only the children that are, you know, academically a lot more -- have a lot more gifts and talents, those people are going to be -- they're going to be a very big push to go to college, right, go to college, go to college. That's the only path because we're going to measure the schools by how many people go to college.

If your school is a very successful school like Cass Tech, you know, a hundred percent of the students go to college, and we really have changed the culture of what's your best skill and ability to, you know, how do we best market our school as a product. And I think that that was a mistake, I think, for many reasons, that we have an opportunity to really nurture, you know, young minds and to try to find out what they are going to be best suited for.

I want to give you another statistic too. In '79,
1979, the average age of an apprentice was 22. In 2018, it's 35. Why is that? Why is that? And I offer you one possible answer. One is when you push all of your -- if you have this push where everybody has to go to college, it wasn't until after they graduated from college that they said, man, I can't get a really good job, maybe I can apply to the IBEW because they make a really -- you know, they make really good middle class income. Let me, you know, apply there.

And we see a lot of our applicants that have graduated, got a degree in something. They did the exploration of career exploration in college. Instead of doing their career exploration in other venues and other places, they did it in college, where they're accumulating student debt. So they graduated out of necessity with a degree that maybe was or was not useful to only have to go into a career that, you know, was going to be economically sustainable, like the trades.

And the good thing, and Ms. Aaron had talked about, you know, in the building trades we pay for our members' education. Our model is a little bit different than others, and I'll say, for us, you know, our members actually collectively, you know, put our money together to pay for new members to get educated through our training. So it's something that we don't use taxpayer dollars. We're self-contained, we're self-sustainable. We don't require any
outside subsidies.

So, when we're talking about, you know, there's not enough -- you know, when you hear, well, there's not enough electricians, there's not enough plumbers, call an electrician right now, or call a plumber to your house to try to get somebody to come to your house and fix something that needs to be fixed around your house, guess what, you're going to be finding out when they do come there's going to be somebody that shows up, 150 bucks an hour or more, 200 bucks an hour because all you need is that fan to work, you need that switch to work, the garbage disposal ain't working, replace the switch.

There is in this country the race to, you know, lower the wages, you know, the race to the bottom. It was a sickness that created now desperation now that we don't have enough tradespeople. And how does this all fit together? I mean, there's many tentacles. I think that this all ties together that, you know, we have -- you know, the companies have really been able to lead the conversation on what's the best -- you know, greed out of control without any types of controls being put on it have left us in kind of this rebuilding of America that we're in right now.

And we have an opportunity to do it. We have an opportunity to rebuild this country in a way that's thoughtful, that is going to be beneficial to all of the
people, even the people that are at the lower end of the spectrum, we have an opportunity to rebuild this in what's in the best interest of all the people, not just some at the top. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great. Thank you.

Dr. Nevshehir?

DR. NEVSHEHIR: So, once again, my name is Noel Nevshehir. I'm Director of International Business Services and Global Strategic Partnerships with Automation Alley.

Briefly stated, Automation Alley is an organization that was created in 1999 to help start-up companies reach the commercialization prototype stage for their product, service, or technology. We since have kind of evolved, and our focus today is on industry 4.0. Industry 4.0, briefly stated, at least in the abstract, it's about bridging the divide between the physical and the digital worlds, and so it's really -- so that's what it is, and I'll explain it just some more in a moment. But what it does, though, is it helps companies increase their efficiency and productivity. In addition, it lowers their costs and also enhances their global competitiveness, especially in the area of innovation.

So our goal is to help particularly small to mid-size enterprises be globally competitive by adapting and implementing industry 4.0 practices and technologies not just within their enterprise but also within their supply chains.
So the underlying technologies that support industry 4.0, also known as Smart Factory and Fourth Industrial Revolution, include the usual suspects you hear of, AI and big data, automation and robotics, 3-D printing, cybersecurity, et cetera.

So, just getting back to my roles, as Director of International Business Services, I help companies do business overseas. I do not send business overseas. You know, we export products, we do not export jobs. So, as a result, what we do is that we do three, four trade missions a year to countries around the world that have a particularly high demand for Michigan-made products, services, and technologies, introduce them with potential business partners, buyers, end users, joint venture partners, people that might be interested in licensing their technologies. And so we are actually a job creator.

And just to maybe circle back, Mr. Chairman, to a point that was made earlier, exports according to the International Trade Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce are, in fact, job creators. They created an algorithm a couple years ago, they haven't updated it since because of COVID, but for every $215,000 in export sales, one job is created here in the States.

In addition, as far as foreign investment is concerned, and I could only speak for Michigan, but that
is -- and, again, I am talking foreign direct investment, inward investment, not outward investment. That's not our job, that's not what I do. But foreign direct investment has created, we have 1100 more companies in Michigan, and as of last year, they supported 313,000 jobs, and 210 of those, 210,000 of those were in manufacturing.

So one of the common denominators that we're talking about seems to be education, and I think that there's a couple of -- you know, just maybe broaden the focus of this discussion, there's a couple economic and national security imperatives that we need to focus on, education being one, immigration being the other.

So, as far as education is concerned, I feel that maybe school choice has got to get a closer look. I'm a little concerned about the NEA's monopoly on public education and the poor outcomes of students today. We've talked about how students aren't being prepared for college. They're not being prepared for alternate careers in apprentice programs. And, incidentally, the U.S., we used to be the envy of the world when it came to apprentice programs in the '40s and '50s. Somehow, though, we lost that, and it was all about people getting a college education.

I would like to adopt the model that Germany and Singapore has in terms of fast-tracking their students on these skilled trades that are so lacking in this country.
Another thing too, I believe that we have to stimulate children's intellectual curiosity about jobs, vocations, in manufacturing at a very young age. The way you do that is with STEM disciplines and second language because I think, if you wait until after high school, you know, you've lost them. You've got to get them early, you know, in the 1st through 8th grade and then onward into secondary school as well.

And another thing I wanted to mention is that what made this country great is immigration. I remember reading this article around 30 years ago, and I still have it. I tore it out of a *Newsweek* magazine. Back then, Thomas Friedman, who wrote the world is flat, wrote this article, it was entitled "The Einstein Immigration Policy."

What he suggested we do is that every time a foreign student graduates from a U.S. university in a technical discipline, in other words, those related to the STEM disciplines, we ought to attach a green card to their diploma and keep them here instead of sending them back to their home countries.

And, you know, again, speaking of the envy of the world, it's not just our apprentice programs that used to be, but our colleges, you know, it is a jewel. This is what attracts people. It is one of our powers that we need to do a better job of exercising.
And it's unfortunate that -- believe me, I'm not a Republican, I'm not a Democrat, I'm just a free thinker expressing to you what I believe to be true, and that is that immigration reform really needs to be addressed because, again, you know, we have a concern about the lack of workforce and talent in this country. You know, the best way to address that is with immigration. And then, in the meantime, you know, address it internally too, and, again, I get back to the school choice. So, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Nevshehir. Can you tell us a little bit more? You mentioned that, you know, your job is actually to sort of promote exports, I think, I guess mostly from Michigan. Do you have particular examples of things that you're most proud of where that has worked out and maybe particularly with respect to companies that maybe have a lot of minority workers or women workers, things like that? Can you just help us kind of get a better flavor for what that looks like?

DR. NEVSHEHIR: Yes. One of the greatest things about my job is just seeing other companies succeed, and, you know, sometimes when you go to talk to companies that don't have any export or international trade experience, they're a little reluctant to go overseas. But, you know, when you talk to them about the benefits of doing business around the world, you know, they realize that just like your 401K, you
have an opportunity to diversify your portfolio. So, when
the domestic market here in the States slows down, you can go
to other markets around the world whose economy might be
doing better that particular year.

And, yeah, as far as, you know, helping minority
companies, we always have, you know, veterans, people of
color, and disabled people that participate in our trade
missions, and it's really been an eye opener. And, you know,
I'm proud to say that our mission now has been awarded the
President's E Award from the White House three times.

The President's E Award was created by JFK back in
1961 because he believed that international trade would
promote peace among nations. And so thousands of people
have -- thousands of companies have won that award.
Generally, it's awarded to, like, 20 companies, 25, 30
companies a year, but we're the only organization, with the
exception of Georgia Economic Development, that has been
awarded it three times. It's a real proud accomplishment
because our export sales have generated close to $1.8 billion
in sales for these companies that participated in our trade
missions, and that translates into more than 8500 jobs for
our region.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great. Thank you very much.

Ms. Hunter.

MS. HUNTER: Yes, thanks. Like I said, the
President of the United Steelworkers Local 1299 here representing the Great Lakes Works Division of United States Steel, the only one of our plants here, even though United States Steel have plants throughout the country.

One of the things I want to talk about is when you went before a break with manufacturing, the necessity for manufacturing, our site alone serves predominantly 95 percent of the auto industry as a flat rolled product. Right now, because of the chip not being accessible, the electronic industry, as we all know, left the States probably, you know, in the '80s, that we don't build our electronic components here is an issue. So we're waiting on the chip. This chip is one of the serious reasons why many of our people were laid off. A different situation where some remain on layoff, and it's an issue. So we have to start manufacturing back in this country.

I want to piggyback on that manufacturing being so important. This is national security. One of the things the pandemic has let us believe and let us -- brought to our attention is that we do not make products here in America, so we have shortages of those products, and one of those shortages was in manufacturing.

Now, with the need, and someone talked about innovation, what's going on with no more robotic stuff and then employers, there has to be manufacturing for the parts.
for these different components. Like I said, the infrastructure bill this year, if we don't make stuff in this country, we cannot depend national security-wise on us getting these components from people we may have conflicts with.

And we're not going to get these components if we're having like we're doing sanctions on Russia, things that's going on, so we need -- the manufacturing base here in America needs to come back. And like I said, it goes back to piggybacking with them being able to have these tax breaks and, you know, get all the liberties of being American without having American business here. And all those things go hand-in-hand with trade.

I went from 1700 members down to 430 members, and that cut -- also cut back the building trades that came out here and did different work. It stopped our food supplies. It stopped the people who provided us with rubber. It stopped the people that provided us with different items we needed to produce the steel.

So there's a big thing that manufacturing has to come back to this country. It creates jobs, okay? With that, when jobs are created, that gives more funds to the educational system that we talk about.

One of the things that's happening when I see people in the building trades, that education system, we used
to have driver's ed in the inner cities. We no longer have
that. Parents can't afford to send their kids to drivers
training to get a license. And I talked about here in
Michigan the high rents of car insurance that deters people
from wanting to get a license. Then I talked about how the
transportation system in the inner city lacks, also in the
suburbs, so when you create jobs in suburbs, they have no
access to it.

But manufacturing is paramount to a thriving
economy here in this country, so it's very paramount that we
get these jobs back, we get the education to man these jobs,
and we make sure that the corporations understand that the
uneven tax breaks and the greed factor destroys most nations.
That's history.

Okay. A lot of great nations have fallen, and they
usually fall from greed. So we have to go back to the point
of understanding that, you know, a country will only thrive
as its lowest citizen, and we want this country to thrive, so
everyone should be able to provide -- you know, be able to
provide a job and education. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Ms. Hunter. I've got a
question for you too. Do you happen to know what the racial
makeup of your local is or the gender makeup or your local
roughly?

MS. HUNTER: Yes. Well, now the gender makeup,
probably like 33 percent are women, 33 percent are women. Honestly, with the -- in different places, and it's an unfortunate state, U.S. Steel will usually put minorities as -- which is, I hate to say it, a dirtier place.

Now, when all those shut down, really, racially, as far as fortunately as to consistency, it has decreased significantly as far as employments of people of color here, yes. So that's one of the things that's a big dynamic too, is like people before me saying union jobs usually have people of color because, let's be honest, racism, as we see, is very prevalent.

And I always say sexism is higher than racism because men of different races can be sexist, and, you know, there's a whole other dynamic. But the issue is that if people of color are more in union jobs, and then, when you dissipate union jobs, that gives a lack of minorities because another job who doesn't have unions -- like, unions will look at the racial proportion of ethnicity because of, you know, different laws.

Non-union places of employment, like mom-and-pop stores, they're not. For smaller businesses, they're not. So those minorities do not get hired in. There's nobody watching. Am I making sense? You hear what I'm saying?

CHAIR KEARNS: You are. Just one quick follow-up. When jobs are lost, as you've said that they have been in
your local, does that have the same impact on white and
people of color -- white people and people of color, or do
you think that there's a disproportionate impact?

MS. HUNTER: Big, huge disproportionate,
especially, like I said, not just people of color but the
women because now they don't have this job here. They have
to go back out and do another job. With the loss of jobs and
predominantly loss of jobs of union jobs, I mean, you know,
big union jobs that make the most money, like I said, they're
not getting employed by the non-union areas. So they're not
being able to find work as quick as someone else. And most
of the time, the people of color live in the urban cities,
like I was explaining. So, when the jobs are not in the
urban areas and they are miles and miles away in different
cities, how do you get to those jobs, okay?

So no, yeah, so the big seriously disproportionate
factor when union jobs are lost for people of color. Like I
said, obtaining jobs in the non-union sector is very
difficult because there is not no one watching the mandates
that make them have to hire a certain amount of people of
minority or women. So, yes.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you very much. And I'm
going to call on, I think, Dr. Robinson next, but I wanted to
just mention that I know we've got a couple folks here who
haven't spoken yet, Mr. Goddeerris and also Ms. Sheldon, so
if you all have anything to add, please let us know, but we'll go on with Dr. Robinson first.

DR. ROBINSON: Thank you. Well, I just wanted to reinforce what was just said because I've seen studies to that very effect. I'm not sure I fully understand the reasons why, when manufacturing downsizes, whether it's layoffs or plant closings, the most jobs are lost and the biggest negative impact on income and wealth is on women and people of color.

Maybe it's still the legacy of, you know, last hired, first fired, that it took a long, long time to get women and people of color into the plants on anything like a proportional basis, but whether it's that and other factors that are also involved, others here are better able to say than I, but it's definitely a wide -- it's not just a particular plant. This is aggregate data that shows this trend.

I did want to talk about, you know, Brother Preuss said, you know, why did everybody think they had to go to university in order to get a decent job, and I think my answer to that is, do you remember what Bill Clinton used to say when he was defending NAFTA? Basically, his line was, his narrative was globalization is out of our control, globalization is happening, our only choice is to adapt, and the way we adapt is we get out of "low-skilled jobs," which
are going to be taken by people of the rest of the world, and we get into high education jobs.

And out of this kind of discourse came this notion -- and there was data to back it up in terms of incomes and income trends for high school and less versus college, at least college education that showed growing, you know, divergence of incomes for a couple decades. That's really slowed now; it's not really nearly as true.

But he was able to point to that data and say, basically, what you can do -- you can't change globalization. The United States of America can't change globalization. What we can do is we can adapt as individuals by getting more education.

And so that's, you know -- there was always a desire upon many working people not to have to have their kids be in the same plant as they were and do the hard, dirty work that they had to do in those plants to get them into a different kind of job. That was there long before Bill Clinton and the globalization discourse came along.

But that whole schtick really reinforced that idea that if you're a responsible parent, you've got to get your kids into university at the same time as we started defunding public universities, right? So we tell them one thing, and then we make it harder and harder for people to go to university without taking on huge amounts of debt unless they
come from already wealthy families.

I wanted to just say a couple things about unions and race. You know, we've already touched on some of that in terms of why is the manufacturing sector, you know, disproportionately likely to shed people of color and women when it downsizes.

But the labor movement, you know, there's another cliché, and that cliché is about the white guy in the hardhat. And, you know, I have nothing against white guys, some of my best friends are white guys, but it is true that the labor movement has put a premium in the last decades on fighting for diversity and fighting for equal pay for women and people of color in their workplaces.

So the gender gap between pay rates in the union sectors is far lower than the gender gap in the non-union sector of our economy. And that's not an accident; that's because unions prioritized equality of pay, equal pay for equal work, in their collective bargaining efforts. And when they used their power to pursue that, they were able to make dramatic headway on that front. In the non-union sector, you just don't see -- there's no commitment on the part of any powerful actor to make that happen.

I would also note that we are now in a situation in this country where the public sector unions, my union, for example, as part of AFT, are half of all union members in the

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country. That's historic that we, you know, got there a few years ago, and the trends are continuing, partly because the levels of union organization in the public sector are three or four times higher than in the private sector.

And in the public sector has a much higher proportion of women and people of color. So the overall labor movement, because of the restructuring and the relative growth of public sector within the labor movement, has become more and more diverse to the point where the gap between white men are probably not a majority of the labor movement anymore.

I haven't got the exact stats at my fingertips, but when you're out of the women and the people of color that are such a substantial part -- they're the majority of my union, they're the majority of AFT, women, I mean -- you know, the overall cliché of the labor movement being a white man's social movement is just not -- it never was entirely accurate, and it's a whole lot less accurate now than it once was. It's not accurate at all anymore.

I also want to say that the -- and my building trades brothers and sisters can speak to this in more detail, but Detroit has really been leading the way in taking advantage of -- by making, virtue of necessity, in a way, that, you know, the people who are now in the trades are aging out. They're retiring faster than they're being
replaced.

Meanwhile, because of the infrastructure spending that's coming out of the federal government, there's a rapid increase in demand for skilled trades workers, and as a result, there's a huge need for training new workers. And the access-for-all program that was developed in metro and is now being, you know, taken out to many other cities across the State of Michigan is specifically targeting, as I understand it -- others can correct me or elaborate -- but I believe it's specifically targeting women and people of color to help get them into the trades to make the trades more racially diverse than they have been historically.

So maybe someone else might want to speak to that because I think that's a really important development in the labor movement.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you very much.

Next up is Mr. Robbins, but I want to just mention too that -- I don't know if Mr. Johnson is still on, but he was raising some issues about Native American trade. I think he referred specifically to -- was it Dubai or Bahrain -- Dubai, and how I think, if I understand correctly, a Canadian competitor had an advantage over a U.S. company when it came to sales of Native American products there. So, if Mr. Johnson can elaborate more on that, I think we had some follow-up questions to understand that better.
But, first, Mr. Robbins?

MR. ROBBINS: Thank you, guys. So I kind of want to give a little bit of elaboration. I think, looking around the room here, I'm probably one of the youngest people in this room. Most of you were probably already invested in your labor careers when I was still in high school.

With that being said, my time in high school, I can't tell you how much it was pushed that you had to go to college, you had to go to college. With that also being said, most all the schools in the area that I lived in as a teenager, they got rid of all their automotive programs.

We're talking about this lack in labor and manufacturing. You know, I'm Assistant Director of the Machinists' Union. With that being said, we represent a lot of mechanics. Those jobs are in such high need. I represent members now and companies that are dying for mechanics. You know, we don't baptize our youth in skilled trades anymore. It just doesn't happen. They push college. You had to go to college if you wanted to make anything out of yourself, and now that we're in this large lack of employment or labor out there, it's detrimental, and it's something that we really have to focus on.

You know, we talked about education, the lack of education. That's something that really needs to be fixed in this country, especially in Michigan. I mean, we're a
manufacturing state. Brother Mark, I believe, spoke in the UAW of, you know, the threat. I want to get back into your role of manufacturing that we were talking about right before break.

But, you know, in the Lansing area, which is what I'm familiar with, I'm originally from the Lansing area, there's two plants in Lansing that keep Lansing afloat, and that's the two General Motors plants there. With that being said, I believe it was Mark who said, you know, for every one manufacturing job lost, you know, it's really 50 down the chain.

So, in Lansing, I came out of a logistics yard. We did all General Motors' logistics for the two plants that run out of Lansing. In Lansing, they make the Traverse, the Buick Enclave, along with the Camaros and the Cadillacs. When all the exports -- we touched on exports a little -- but when the exports got shut down, you know, General Motors wasn't shipping cars overseas, which directly affected our plant, right? We're not loading these cars onto the trains to get shipped out overseas. That was a huge loss of jobs for just my shop.

But the bigger effect to it is, is just down the road from us, there's dozens and dozens and dozens of subcontracted companies that make parts for the cars in Lansing, and General Motors wants to pull out of Lansing. It
would be a ghost town, like I've heard some of you say. That is the lifeblood of Lansing. I mean, the two facilities there, they push out about 1500 vehicles a day out of those two plants.

If you were to shut that down, you would literally cripple the Lansing economy and any manufacturing that goes on in it. You know, like I said, there's dozens of subcontracted companies that that is the lifeblood of Lansing.

With that being said, you know, Lansing has a high majority of minorities in there. Again, if you were to pull out that support from those manufacturing jobs, you want to talk about directly affecting minorities, I couldn't -- and, again, you know, I'm not super familiar with Detroit as this has been a recent move for me, but the minorities in Lansing are huge. There's a lot of Hispanic and Black minorities in Lansing, along with Hmong and Chinese. So the effect that that would have on minorities in Lansing when it comes to manufacturing, it would just be catastrophic.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. And one thing you said, Mr. Robbins, and I think I've heard from others -- this is an interesting thing that I think we'll have to give some thought to -- we often talk about the need for education and training in order to get jobs, and I'm definitely hearing that all from you all, but I'm also hearing from you all and
Mr. Preuss and others that we need jobs in order to be able
to invest in education and training. So it's kind of -- I
guess it kind of goes both ways.

I'm going to call on Mr. DePaoli and then Mr.
Preuss, and then, after that, I'm going to ask the other
Commissioners if they have any questions. Mr. DePaoli?

MR. DEPAOLI: Yes, thank you, just a quick comment.
You know, there's been a lot of talk about education and how,
you know, high schools need to start gearing students more
towards skilled trades and not just college. And there was a
comment made earlier that that maybe is somewhat due to NEA's
monopoly on education.

And I just wanted to comment on that because I'm
not sure if everybody knows, but the Michigan legislature has
stripped the NEA of a lot of its bargaining rights, and part
of the reason that you see a lot of these classes go away
that are geared towards skilled trades is the Michigan
legislature has repeatedly passed bills that defer money,
funding, to public schools and shift them over to for-profit
charter schools, and that's part of the problem we see when
we look at funding in education and why we don't have these
classes geared towards skilled trades.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you.

And then I'm going to turn to Mr. Preuss. Also, I
had promised that we would talk about kind of policies to
make things better, and I think, if you all are holding back
on any of that, you know, please don't feel the need to do
so. If you have any thoughts on that, we want to hear that
as well. But I'm going to call on Mr. Preuss and then ask
other Commissioners if they have any questions. Mr. Preuss?

MR. PREUSS: Wow, you're right when you started
this whole conversation that we're going to run over because
it's going to start heating up here, and it is, and there's
so many people to really comment on, you know.

I just want to kind of, like, comment on Dr.
Robinson, what he was saying earlier about how we've waited
and waited for the institutions to be able to produce a
baseline-level student to come into the trades, which,
historically, that's the way it worked, is that, you know,
kids would graduate from high school, and that post-secondary
education, they would come into the trades, and we would
teach them, the trades would teach them.

In the building trades, we would teach them how to
become the best electrician, plumber, pipefitter, laborer,
bricklayer and what have you, all the different trades, but
what's happened is, because of the disinvestment, because the
revenue -- there was no revenue sharing and revenue that
would support these school systems, especially in the urban
settings that money's been pulled out of, that the industry
was being blamed for, well, why don't you have enough Black
electricians?

Well, that's a very complicated problem because, if the school system -- if you're only top-level, successful students, you're going to push them to college, and then the students that, let's say the -- you know, we have a great majority of our students that are not academically -- they don't have the fundamentals in place, that puts us at a disadvantage.

So, as to Dr. Robinson bringing up access for all, access for all was developed at the IBEW in our union hall. It was the unions that got together to say that we collectively have to fix this problem because we can't wait on industry to come up with a solution. We can't wait for the other institutions to come up with a solution.

So, to Dr. Robinson's point -- in fact, then it was Don O'Connell and the building trades, Pat Devlin and some of the other people, and I'm probably going to forget somebody's name and they're going to be upset that I forget their names and to give people credit. But we've gone into doing pre-apprenticeship programs, apprenticeship readiness programs. We've started and been partnered with many different groups, nonprofits that we've been able to prop up to address those minimum standards that are necessary to be successful in our trades.

Can we do more? Should we be doing more?
Absolutely, we should be. Is there a problem with -- it's unfortunate, the competition that has kind of, like, stalemated a lot of progress, but, nevertheless, I mean, you push back and push through, and hopefully we can use government as a resource to kind of force people to working together again that don't really work together very well.

You know, if we could, you know, get everybody in the same room and decide that, you know, we're not going to leave this room until we've got this problem solved with education, I think we could get further down the road.

We saw that the collaboration does exist when there's a big-ticket item. When Amazon decides, you know, we're going to be putting our new headquarters somewhere, we saw industry in the metropolitan Detroit area, we saw Republicans and Democrats working together like we've never seen before because we had a goal of attracting a big corporate entity to the city. And I think that has to be the same goal that we have now that corporations and companies are going to move where there's talent. Tax abatements are not going to be enough for the future economy. It's going to be who has the talent.

And people say there's a shortage, there's a shortage of people. There's a shortage of people that have skill and ability. There's not a shortage of people that need a job. There's over 200,000 people in the City of
Detroit -- I sit on the Workforce Board, by the way -- there's over 200,000 people in the City of Detroit that are not working, that are without employment, 200,000.

There's not a shortage of people, but there is a shortage of education, there's a shortage of people having access. One of the things that the Mayor said that I think that I agreed with -- this is a few years back -- he said that skill and ability and talent, intelligence, is distributed equally amongst all races, people, throughout the entire world, but opportunity is not.

And you know what, that is very well-said. I agree with it 100 percent because opportunity has not been shared very equally with all the minority groups because the people that have the power do not like to share the power with other minority groups. That's why the unions have been the equalizer, throughout history, the equalizer in this unfair distribution of wealth that we see that's happening. And that's what it comes down to.

When we talk about earlier with greed with Ms. Hunter, what she was saying about greed, there has to be controls on greed. Otherwise, leaving the powerful corporations unchecked to be able to pay for their own politicians and invest into the political system in a way that they can manipulate the rules to favor them, that's where the problem lies. And I'll end my comment there.
Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

I know we've got Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Brown Maxey who wanted to speak, but I'm going to give our other Commissioners a chance to speak first, and then I'll turn back to you all. Commissioner Johanson, would you like to speak?

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thanks to all of you for being here today. I find this very interesting, and we're covering a lot of ground, I have to say, compared to some of the other roundtables we've had. The discussion's been very forthcoming, which is great. This is exactly what we want.

I'm going to cover an issue which I don't think has been discussed today. Geography plays a role in each life of a city, and the City of Detroit borders Canada, yet a speaker today mentioned that Detroit is one of the poorest cities in the United States. How much does Detroit benefit from trade with Canada, and how much do the people of Detroit benefit from trade with Canada?

MR. PREUSS: I can't get my microphone to mute, so I think that's an omen. If I could just comment real quickly? And forgive me for being out of line, but our border -- I think we're the number one or number two border in the country as far as the amount of -- I think it's upwards of three-quarters of a trillion dollars' worth of
goods and services that pass through our borders here in Detroit.

But, at the same time, we're the poorest city in the country, and 78 percent of our population is Black. So, you know, there's a huge distribution problem of wealth that seems to deliberately evade the population, and that's because the people that control the power, that control the money, that control the trade, have been in control of who gets it and who doesn't.

And for the last 30 years, Black and Brown people in the City of Detroit have been excluded from all of those gains. And we haven't even talked about property. We haven't talked about the access to being able to buy your own house. I mean, if we look at who's been able to go to the bank and get a loan, get a mortgage, in I think it was 2016, there was only 40 -- or not 40, excuse me, 400 mortgages in the City of Detroit.

The people that are buying the property in the City of Detroit, it's mostly cash sale. That's changed a little bit, but who's the biggest landowner in the City of Detroit? It's the City of Detroit, the people of the City of Detroit. The landowners are the taxpayers, but, unfortunately, the politicians control who has the access to that property. And that has not been evenly distributed. It's not been fairly utilized to benefit the people; it's benefitted the corporate
interests, the people that are paying for the politicians. So I could go on and on about that, but I just wanted to touch on the fact that, you know, we're one of the largest international borders that has a lot of economic trade that goes through our system, but it does not touch the residents.

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: I might add that one reason I ask the question is I'm from Texas, and I know the cities in Texas on the border do seem to benefit quite a bit from trade. So that's why I'm just kind of confused by the situation here in Detroit.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. I think next to answer Commissioner Johanson's question is Dr. Robinson, and then Mr. O'Connell after that.

DR. ROBINSON: Yeah, I think it's a good question. I think we could say that if we went back further in time, the highly integrated economies of Ontario and Michigan, the benefits from the high level of integration between those two national economies was, you know, much more evenly distributed.

So it's really what my brother, Rick, was saying. It's not about how much trade you do, how big are those trade flows; it's about what rules govern the way those flows occur and how do those rules and the impact they have on these dynamics affect distribution of who benefits and who doesn't.
So, if we look, in 1965, the auto industry of Ontario and -- you can in the United States, but, really, that meant to a very significant degree Ontario and Michigan and Ohio, took a quantum leap in integration. Much more trade started to go across the borders when the auto pact was signed. Why? Because the auto pact said we're going to take down the tariffs. Canada took down the high tariff walls that they had built up with their historic policy for ensuring that there was auto production in Canada because they didn't want to just import cars from the United States; they wanted auto jobs in Canada as part of their economic development strategy.

But the principle upon which the Auto Pact of 1965 was based is, for every car, a big three or whatever it was in those days -- there was more than the big three -- for every car they export to Canada, we want a car built in Canada that will be exported, in part -- some of the cars manufactured in Canada will be exported back to the United States.

So it was basically a principle that ensured that the amount of auto employment in each country corresponded to the amount of automobile consumption that that country did.

Now, with NAFTA, we basically ditched the auto pact and we said we're going to integrate three national economies. In the Canada-U.S. case, we had both auto
economies in both countries were united by a strong, single union. The United Auto Workers was truly an international union in those days that represented all the auto workers in Canada and in the United States.

And that was part of the reason the auto pact took the form that it did, was the UAW pushed very hard on both sides of the border for these kinds of trade principles. Under NAFTA, if Mexico had followed auto pact rules, there would be hardly any plants in Mexico because the workers in Mexico, both in the auto plants and everywhere else, are paid, on average, one-tenth of what the workers get here.

They don't have enough money to import very many cars, and so not very many plants could be located in Mexico under auto pact rules. But we ditched the auto pact and basically opened the spigot for as many plants to be shifted to Mexico as the big three found profitable to do.

And, hey, if you can cut your labor costs by 90 percent by shifting to a country where independent unions are repressed by the government and by the company acting in tandem and, guess what, by a labor federation that's closely tied to the government and acts as a third party to also crush independent unionism, you're going to be able to keep those labor costs low no matter how high the productivity of those plants is.

I've been in there and will see a plant; it's as
good as any plant in the United States, good as any plant in Michigan in terms of productivity and quality. They pay their workers 20 bucks -- when I was last there, it was a few years ago, admittedly -- 20 bucks a day, not 20 bucks an hour. So, you know, those are trade rules. We make those rules. We can make them one way; we can make them another way. And we have to understand when we make them a particular way that it has very important distributive impacts.

One of the impacts of shifting from auto pact trade rules to NAFTA trade rules is that a whole lot of the gains from efficiency of integrating those two national economies, as well as the gains from productivity over time from, you know, technological innovation and the like went out of the hands of workers in both countries and into the hands of the 1 percent.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you.

Mr. DePaoli?

MR. DePAOLI: Yeah, just to answer that question, and Dr. Robinson kind of touched on it, but one of the things different about the trade with Canada is that their wages and their environmental standards and things like that are fairly equal to ours. So we don't face that unlevel playing field that we do in other countries such as Mexico and China.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you.
Do other Commissioners have questions?

I'm sorry, Mr. O'Connell. Thank you.

MR. O'CONNELL: So one perspective that I have is through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program exclusively. This is when the United States Department of Labor has taken a look in 2020 and certified seven organizations within Detroit alone. In 2019, there were four organizations. That we know of in the past five years, a minimum of 1400 jobs have been lost in Detroit alone.

I think the better question is, are we replacing these jobs in Detroit that are going overseas that are being impacted by trade? The decline of the Detroit industry has an extreme impact on its individuals and on its tax base, which is not helping to fund that infrastructure that's needed to help fund the education.

I think a lot of my colleagues here have mentioned the Right to Work -- or, I'm sorry, not Right to Work. The Right to Read lawsuit that came about within the organization that didn't allow these individuals to actually have the basic education to read within Detroit itself.

What we really need to take a look at is why these jobs are going overseas. The USITC actually investigates the dumping of goods and how they're impacted within the U.S. One of our best ways to combat trade is through tariffs, but we are reactionary. When there is an impact somewhere, you
take a look at it, you say, okay, how many organizations were impacted by this? Is this an actual problem within that organization? And then you issue determinations of organizations that were actually impacted around the United States.

Well, I want to say that the product that has been dumped on the U.S. may not be specific to those organizations alone. It could be spread about across other organizations as well. We need to examine the product as a whole and maybe not the specific organizations to indicate whether or not something has been dumped on the U.S. because we're not catching everybody. Like I said, it's a minimum of 1400 jobs. There could be many, many more that have been lost in Detroit.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. O’Connell.

Vice Chair Stayin, did you have a question?

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Yes, I do. Thank you.

Mr. O'Connell, there's a lot of talk about foreign investment in the United States creating jobs and replacing some of the jobs that have gone overseas. What is your view on foreign investment in the United States? And who does it benefit?

MR. O'CONNELL: Foreign investment in the United States benefits not only the United States as a whole but individuals who are benefitting from receiving jobs within
It's a snowball impact within communities themselves. I think I touched on this a little bit earlier. But, if a company is investing within the United States, and as an example, I'm going to say creating a manufacturing plant. Choose any city. That's going to create jobs within that city, which is going to allow more individuals to work, bring in a higher tax base, help fund education programs, help fund infrastructure, create these mom-and-pop jobs that have kind of gone away in the past and help stabilize them.

Not only that, we're going to look at restaurants, individuals after their shift at a manufacturing plant are going to support the local business restaurants. They're going to go out to eat. They're going to spend the money that is coming in there.

I'm a big supporter of foreign investment within the United States as a whole and not United States companies investing in manufacturing plants and goods and services outside of it.
mentioned earlier that we have 1100 foreign companies with operations here in Michigan that generate 313,000 jobs, 212 of which are in manufacturing. In addition, these jobs pay 18 percent more than domestic employers, and the reason for that is because a lot of these foreign companies are high tech, hence they're more higher value-added jobs and, therefore, they're able to pay their employees a little bit more than a Michigan company that's just focused on their domestic operations.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Anybody else?

DR. ROBINSON: Well, I would add on that that, you know, we come up against this when we talk about buying union in the automobile sector. Sometimes we confuse buying union and buying American. We have a lot of foreign-owned plants in the southern parts of the country that have resisted union organization, often breaking the law in order to do so. And it's interesting. What's their motivation? Why do they do that? Why wouldn't they be willing to be part of a union?

Now we've got Elon Musk going to Germany and trying to build a plant there that he hopes will be non-union as well. So this can work in both directions.

But I think there's a question of control, there's a question of to what degree should the workers have a right to have a say in how that workplace operates. We have plants from Germany as well as Japan that have unions in their own
countries and they pay their workers higher wages than they
pay in the United States, generally resisting unions in this
country. I think it's partly about control and it's partly
about -- although they track the union wages pretty closely
because they know if they didn't keep up with UAW wages, that
would be a big organizing, you know, point to convince
workers to join UAW. But they don't pay nearly the same
benefits, which are harder to track.

So they're definitely holding down labor costs.
And because they are -- they don't have the legacy costs,
they're a lot newer plants, so they're not supporting
retirees in the same way as the big three American plants
are, they're actually able to be much more cost-competitive.

So the irony is that it's not the imported BMWs
from Germany where the workers are paid more than the UAW
workers are that are undercutting union jobs in this country.
It's moving to Mexico plus companies that move to the United
States and then resist going union that undercut the wage
structure that unions have been able to establish for auto
workers. So that's just to that point.

I mean, foreign investment is a mixed bag. It
really depends on not all jobs are equal. Not even all
high-tech jobs are equal. It depends what kind of a behavior
are those foreign investors bringing to this country? And
the foreign auto investors have not been behaving the way
they are expected to and do in their own countries. When
they come here, it's okay, a whole different story and not a
good one.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you.

I have another question. There was an article in
the paper recently that hiring of college students versus
hiring a non-college student who has the skills for making
things, and, you know, it seems like -- is that happening?
Are we having jobs that would be better filled by young
people who are coming out of high school who have the skills
to do the things in the plant as opposed to maybe college
students? And is there some sort of a priority that may be
misplaced? Any comments on that?

DR. ROBINSON: Well, I've read that some employers
are using college, do you have a degree or not, just as a
sorting mechanism; you know, independent of whether or not
it's actually skill related, to anything they might have got
with a college degree, they're just saying, well, we've got
500 applications, 200 of them have done a BA and the rest
haven't, let's just work with the 200.

So that it's a kind of sorting mechanism, it's a
way of narrowing down the pool, but a very crude one and one
that might often not be appropriate. But I don't know beyond
that what else might be going on there.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Anybody else have a comment?
CHAIR KEARNS: Dr. Nevshehir had a comment on that.

MR. NEVSHEHIR: Great point. So I just want to preface this by saying that some of the dumbest people I know have always been considered the most educated people in this country. And what I mean by that is that sometimes, you know, you have these college-educated kids that have this sense of entitlement and feel as though they can go into any employer, dictate terms of their employment. In the meantime, you have other people out there from the rural areas, from the inner city, that are hungry and they have a better work ethic than some of the so-called educated people in this country. So I don't think we can equate education with a good work ethic.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: We have Ms. Brown-Maxey would like to speak.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Please do.

MS. BROWN-MAXEY: I want to agree with you, and that is true. But it's a myth, it's a thought that if you don't have a degree, then you're not qualified. That's what it is. Or, if they do hire you, they don't respect the fact that you don't have the degree. So even though you may get hired, you will not get the same pay as that of a educated, entitled college degree person, okay, because so many jobs have you got to have experience plus a degree or some type of
work background. So what does that do for that creative, innovative, motivated genius that has just graduated from high school? Where does that person go?

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Good question.

I have one more question and I would like to ask about, when I went to high school in the stone age, we had a shop class and students could choose do you want to go into, you know, English or German or language or do you want to go to the shop and have shop class, and they learned there how to do things, make things. In Cincinnati, Ohio, we had a lot of manufacturing plants and it provided young people who come out of high school with some skills and who have talent and learn and can be excellent students, excellent employees, and they were absorbed by all these manufacturing plants and one of the reasons that they were so successful. I see some nodding over here. Would you like to comment as well?

CHAIR KEARNS: Dr. Robinson I think he's referring to.

DR. ROBINSON: We had that kind of shop when I was in high school and some of my good friends, you know, decided to take that option and, you know, they -- I'm talking about people who graduated in 1975. They still felt that they could get good jobs without going to college. Very few of the students I went to high school with in a suburb of Ottawa actually did go to college. They turned out to be, you know,
at the cusp of this very big change where they did pay a big
price in many cases for not going to college.

But, again, that's because we structured our
economy in a certain way. We adopted certain rules about how
we would run it and regulate it that created this massive
bias against people who were not college-educated workers.
It hadn't been that way for the previous 30 years, and it
didn't have to be that way for the following 30 years, but it
was because of decisions we made about how to structure trade
policy among other things. It wasn't the only thing, but it
was a big piece of the puzzle.

      VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Okay. Thank you.
I have no further questions.

      CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Vice Chair Stayin.
I'm very proud of the wood stool I made in my shop
class, I have to say. I wasn't good enough that I could
continue on in the shop class, but I'm pretty proud of it
anyway.

      Okay, Mr. Robbins, I think you had something you
wanted to add.

      MR. ROBBINS: Yeah, I just wanted to touch on, you
know, that basis of what we were talking about. You know, in
2006, I believe, is when all the shop classes closed in the
Lansing area in high schools.

      With that being said, I'm 31 years old. I never
had the opportunity to be in one of those classes, right? So I feel like in a trade of which I'm in now, I was put at a disadvantage.

You know, we talked about people later on in life getting into skilled trades, and in my opinion, you know, we're not baptizing our high school kids and giving them options, other options than going to college.

You know, I have friends that came out of high school that went directly into plumbers, pipefitters, electricians, along with the machinists union, and I have other friends that have their four-year degrees and are still working at a dead-end job. You know, I have the guys that are welders that are making $100,000 a year, and then I have friends that are working at Target at minimum wage with a four-year degree. You know, there's such a misconception of, I don't want to say misconception because college is a necessity in some situations, correct? But, when it comes to labor, again, it's lacking. And I feel like our youth and our upcoming youth are being left out of the pool and not given the opportunities or the knowledge and education I should say to grow into these jobs that we so desperately need.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. I keep being reminded of the statistic that only about a third of Americans have a
college degree, which always kind of blows me away.

I don't know, Commissioner Karpel, did you have any questions?

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. No, I don't, but I do want to say thank you to everyone. I've been listening carefully the whole time. I'm sorry I couldn't have my camera on earlier, I have a sick kid, so I was doing a little bit of double duty, but I think it's been a great conversation and just appreciate everyone sharing your perspectives. It's really been a good conversation.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. I hope she gets better soon.

Dr. Nevshehir?

DR. NEVSHEHIR: I just want to make a point kind of getting back to what we were talking about earlier. We have to be reminded that wherever manufacturing goes, innovation follows, not to mention the supply chains. So, as we try to in-source production back into the United States, particularly given the geostrategic situation with China and Russia and other countries around the world, we can't turn on that supply chain or all that workforce talent that we lost in the interim on, like, a faucet. It's just going to require some major retraining and workforce development. And I think, you know, just given the fact that whether we like it or not, you know, education, I think, is the ultimate key
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to ensuring the future success of our country.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

Vice Chair Stayin, did you have another question?

MR. SECRETARY: You're on mute, Vice Chair.

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Thank you. I've got it.

I want to thank all of you for being here and for
all of your great responses to our questions. We are working
diligently to try to address some of these issues and
preparing a response to the U.S. Trade Representative that
has asked us to do this investigation and prepare a response.

I did want to mention one other thing that doesn't
come up in this particular arena in the sense of what we're
talking about, but one of the things that the United States
International Trade Commission does, one of the major things
we do is we look at the impact of unfairly traded products
that have come to the United States. The Commerce Department
determines whether the product is sold at less than fair
value or that it was subsidized, though, clearly, when a
government subsidizes the production of a product and they
ship that product to the United States, it's going to be way
below what our products are because our governments don't
subsidize manufacturing.

So what we do, what comes to us is, have these
imports injured the U.S. industry? And if we determine that
the U.S. industry has been injured by these imports, we make

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our decision and then, ultimately, the administrative process will be finished, the antidumping duty or countervailing duty will be moved, and that will be enforced at all of our ports. And in that way, when a product comes to the United States and it's one of the ones that we've dealt with, it will not get into the United States.

We're looking at what we can do to keep our workers working to be able to support their families and their communities. So just to put that into the process. This is something, we act as judges. Cases are presented before us, and then we make our decisions.

And that is all I need to say. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Vice Chair Stayin.

Mr. Jeffers?

MR. JEFFERS: Yes. I would just like to say that we shouldn't wait for a company to have job loss. We shouldn't wait for a company to go down and a lot of people be unemployed. We should be proactive and stop the imports from coming into the United States instead of waiting for job loss because, again, job loss leads to human factors, to people being hurt, suicides and everything else.

And another thing, I did get TAA. Out of our company, out of 800 people that were eligible for TAA, 650 people used it, which is a lot. And they only trained us for jobs that were out on the market now, not for the increase in
jobs coming in from foreign countries. It was just for the
jobs that were currently out there. So, luckily, some people
did find jobs, but some people didn't. They had to retire
because, like I said, at the age of 56, they had to retire
early because there was no job for them. Nobody was going to
hire them. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Jeffers.

Dr. Robinson and then Ms. Brown Maxey.

DR. ROBINSON: I just wanted to respond to the
point about antidumping and the role of the USITC that Vice
Chair Stayin was just mentioning because I remember during
the NAFTA debates, which I was very involved in, we talked a
lot about the concept of social dumping. We talked a lot
about the idea that if a government suppresses its workers'
right to organize, that's a kind of subsidy, and that kind of
subsidy ought to be taken into account, and I think the
Europeans actually developed the concept of social dumping
and tariffs. They have a name, maybe it was social tariffs
or something that reflected tariffs specifically designed to
neutralize the competitive advantage that comes from
violating worker rights to organize, to bargain collectively,
and to strike.

I don't think the USITC has ever really taken up
that doctrine, and I would urge you to do so. I mean, I
think that's just one little piece of our trade law, the

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dumping law, but that falls directly under your jurisdiction
in a way that, you know, negotiating NAFTA or the WTO does
not, so that's a piece you can work on. That's a piece you
can do something about.

And I would also note in the context of comparing
ourselves to how the Europeans handle this that when the
European -- before the European Union, when it was still
called the European community, was contemplating whether or
not to allow the trade preferences that membership in the
European community confers on its members to the countries of
Greece, Spain, and Portugal back in the late '70s, they said
you will not be able to join the European community until you
have democratic systems of government.

Think about that as a principle for American trade
policy to be organized around. Think about if we had a tier
of countries that we trade with that actually have democratic
unions or democratic governments that respect labor rights,
and they get most favored nation status. But any country
that doesn't meet those two criteria, they don't respect
worker rights and/or they're not democratic -- and those two
tend to go very, very closely together, as I'm sure you
know -- they don't get that status. They get an inferior
status or maybe they don't get to export to us at all.

Maybe we phase that out. We probably can't do it
immediately, but we say uh-uh. No, that's not going to
continue. That's not beneficial to our workers. It's not beneficial to your workers either. We're facilitating you operating in a way that's extremely harmful to your workers. It's a lose/lose proposition for the workers around in both countries, and we're not going to be participating in that kind of system anymore,

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

Vice Chair Stayin?

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Yes. I think that there's one more thing I needed to mention and that is that our statute not only applies to injuries that actually have occurred, but they apply to threatened injury to these things before it actually gets to the destruction standpoint on our country and our workers. So, you know, it's do you have current injury or is the company and the employees threatened with injury. Those are the issues and those are the issues we decide. Thank you very much.

CHAIR KEARNS: Ms. Brown-Maxey, did you have something you wanted to add?

MS. BROWN-MAXEY: Yeah, just to piggyback on what they said. They're absolutely right. And I just want to say something that I was thinking.

The most important way, in my opinion, one of the most important ways to fix this is to flip our whole model of trade agreements around. Instead of being based on making it
easier for companies to move jobs wherever they want in the world, it should be based on creating a much stronger protection for workers rights and environmental health and safety standards across the world. Doing so would help level the playing field and make it much easier for American workers to compete without having to worry about their jobs and could they be removed by other countries where workers are only paid pennies an hour. We're talking unions. We're talking workers' rights.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

I think, Mr. O'Connell, you had something to say.

No?

Okay, does anyone else have any further comments?

That's a pretty good place to end if you ask me.

Yeah, Dr. Nevshehir?

DR. NEVSHEHIR: Yeah, I really enjoyed this discussion. During the break, I was talking to the Chairman about, you know, sometimes what we need more is empathy toward one another and that you judge a country by how well we take care of our weakest members. In that regard, I don't think we do such a great job.

But it's nice, though, to be in a room where we have diverse opinions and everybody's respected. And this could be a model for bringing our polarized country back together because, you know, change doesn't happen at the
extreme right. It doesn't happen at the extreme left.  
Change always happens in the middle. So I was really honored 
to be part of this, Chairman Kearns, and I appreciate you 
inviting me. I really learned a lot.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you.

We're heading back to Washington tomorrow. Maybe 
we'll bring something back to Washington, a little bit more 
bipartisan and reasonable approach.

Mr. DePaoli, did you have something to say?

MR. DePAOLI: No, I was actually giving a thumbs up 
to his comment, but I hit the wrong button. Sorry.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's okay.

Does anyone else have anything they want to close 
with?

(No response.)

CHAIR KEARNS: All right. Well, then we will wrap 
this up. Thank you all very much. This has been an 
excellent conversation and we really appreciate everyone 
participating. Have a great evening.

(Whereupon, at 4:10 p.m., the roundtable in the 
above-entitled matter adjourned.)

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