



July 18, 2023

The Honorable Emilia Sykes  
United States House of Representatives  
1217 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Thank You For Supporting NDAA Amendment Regarding Strategic Importance of Natural Rubber**

Congresswoman Sykes:

On behalf of the Greater Akron Chamber (GAC), The University of Akron (UA), and the broad array of industry leaders we work with in our innovation ecosystem, we would like to express our appreciation for your continued leadership on key issues facing our economy. Your recent support for the NDAA amendment titled "Sec. 836. SENSE OF CONGRESS RELATING TO RUBBER SUPPLY" is a positive step for [longstanding efforts to urge the federal government to recognize natural rubber as an economic and national security imperative](#), and to further invest in research and development for increasing domestic sourcing and supply of this critically important material.

As a regional economic development organization, the GAC manages Ohio's [Polymer Industry Cluster](#) (PIC), which is a regional effort to strengthen connections between hundreds of companies and several world-renowned universities that comprise the Northeast Ohio polymer industry to spark economic growth, accelerate innovation, and transform this region into a thriving global focal point. As our region's leading research institute and a global leader in polymers science and plastics engineering, UA provides expertise, capacity, and a "neutral ground" status that provides space for our industry partners to collaborate and advance key initiatives.

For over two years, the PIC has been working on identifying key industry obstacles and rallying around viable solutions. As you know, unlocking federal R&D funding to establish new ways of domestically sourcing natural rubber has been one of our top priorities. The simple yet significant policy change the NDAA amendment represents would greatly benefit Ohio's business community and have massive implications on our economy and national security.

Thank you for your continued leadership and support of this important issue. As the legislative process continues, we along with our partners stand ready to assist you in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steve Millard'.

Steve Millard  
President & CEO  
Greater Akron Chamber

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gary L. Miller'.

Gary L. Miller  
President  
The University of Akron