



March 6, 2023

Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: George Mason University Community Project Proposal for **Center for AI Innovation for Economic Competitiveness**

Dear Senators Kaine and Warner,

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce members and their over 500,000 employees, I am writing this letter in support of the **George Mason University Community Project Proposal for a first-in-the-nation Center for AI Innovation for Economic Competitiveness.**

In close collaboration with the business community, the Center will:
a) develop a For-Virginia AI Strategy; (b) track Virginia's business AI adoption rate; (c) offer programs to SMEs to understand, capitalize, and innovate on emerging and disruptive AI technologies, such as ChatGPT and other generative AI technologies; and (d) expand the talent pipeline through employee training, reskilling, and upskilling in AI technologies, with particular attention paid to underserved communities.

We are fully in support of this initiative as we believe it can address key issues related to state economic competitiveness. While several US states have been proactive in AI markets, the Commonwealth currently lacks an AI strategy. Yet, the AI market is rapidly expanding, both globally and in the US. The Biden administration, with Senate leadership and guidance provided by Senators Warner and Kaine, aims to galvanize states and communities to capitalize on technologies of the future. The proposed Center will be critical to the Commonwealth's capitalizing on both emerging and disruptive AI technologies, such as ChatGPT and others. The state is uniquely positioned for this effort having powerful technology and education sectors and enabling infrastructure for data communications and storage, demonstrated recently by the expansion of data centers across the Commonwealth. The Center's goals comprehensively address technology development and adoption by small and



medium sized enterprises, who are the drivers of the Virginia economy, and include critical workforce development and economic opportunity elements.

George Mason University also has the unique experience and expertise to successfully undertake, develop, and operate the Center, leveraging several colleges, institutes, and centers that bring together the much-needed expertise in AI innovation, workforce, and economic development both to successfully implement and execute this community project and sustain it in the long term.

We are very excited about this community project proposal and are looking forward to the opportunity to work with this team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Coons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Coons
President and CEO
Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce

About the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce

Originally founded in 1925 as a Fairfax county-focused business advocacy organization, the Northern Virginia Chamber has grown into the region's largest Chamber of Commerce, drawing members and impacting policy across the Greater Washington D.C. Metropolitan Region. Today, representing close to 500,000 employees, the diversity of our community is one of our greatest assets, offering opportunities to learn from one another and form personal connections that help guide lasting business growth.

The Chamber's goal is to be considered not only a business partner but also an agent of change for our members. We do this through our work in government advocacy, education through events and programs, networking, promotion of member businesses, and recognition through awards. We are proud to have worked together over these many years to build a meaningful association that enriches our community and look forward to continuing that good work.

For more information, visit novachamber.org.