

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 17, 2016

Christian Koch, President and Chief Executive Officer
Volkswagen Group of America Chattanooga Operations
8001 Volkswagen Drive
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37416

Sebastian Patta, Executive Vice President, Human Resources
Volkswagen Group of America Chattanooga Operations
8001 Volkswagen Drive
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37416

Dear Mr. Koch and Mr. Patta,

We applaud Volkswagen's long history of a collaborative management style that incorporates workers into business decisions through Works Councils. Because of the company's reputation for respecting workers' voices in the workplace, we were surprised to learn you are not supporting the skilled trades employees' decision at your Chattanooga, Tennessee facility to elect union representation by the United Autoworkers (UAW). We urge you to reverse your opposition to this basic expression of workers' rights and, as you have done with other unions and Works Councils globally, recognize the UAW and begin collectively bargaining with them as soon as possible.

We understand you are challenging the workers' election on the grounds that skilled employees should not be considered a unique bargaining unit. This claim appears baseless. There is a well-established precedent that skilled trade employees have the right to seek representation in their own bargaining unit. Since 1961 in the American Cyanamid Co. decision (131 NLRB 909), the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) set forth its policy that maintenance-only units are appropriate where the proposed unit employees share a community of interest. The Board has consistently maintained this standard for decades, including in the more recent Sundor Brands, Inc. case in 2001 (334 NLRB 755).

In addition to being substantively questionable, we are concerned your request for review is a dilatory tactic to avoid collective bargaining with the skilled trade workers. Despite your commitment to Works Councils and collective bargaining across your facilities worldwide, Volkswagen attempted to block the skilled trades election from the outset. We ask you to reconsider your request for an NLRB review and immediately begin collectively bargaining with UAW representation of the skilled trades.

Volkswagen has a laudatory record of strong labor-management relations throughout the world. We urge you to extend that recognition of workers' rights to your United States facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Sincerely,



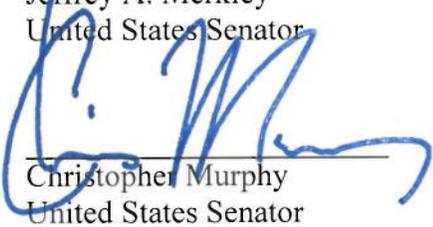
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



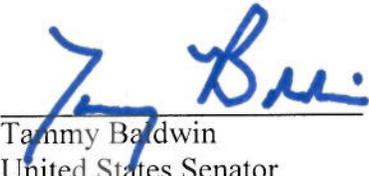
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



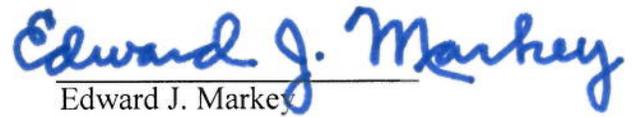
Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



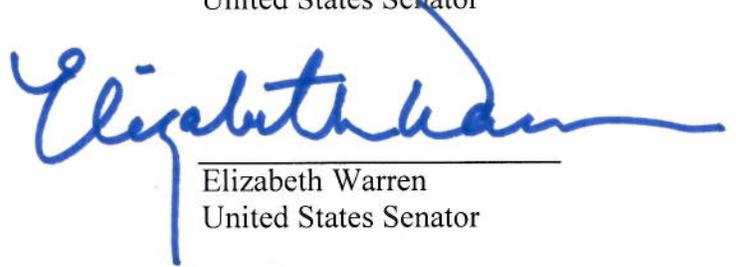
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator