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To Whom It May Concern:

I want to draw your attention to an exciting new initiative designed to bring together the youth of the world in a virtual global civics experience: the International Youth Initiative.

Currently under development through Michigan Civics Institute (MCI) and several entities at the University of Michigan, the International Youth Initiative applies the programming of MCI's Michigan Youth Caucus to an international scale. The Initiative provides our young people with the opportunity to learn about and interact with youth from other cultures, while also providing a platform for the expression of youth concerns around the world.

We cannot deny the reality of the 21st Century: we live in a global community in which the traditional boundaries of countries and peoples are being redrawn through technology and commerce. The technological ability for almost instantaneous communication and contact with individuals halfway around the globe means that our world becomes both smaller and more diverse at the same time. Our young people need the skills and know-how to survive and thrive in this changing world.

I endorse the activities of the Initiative and encourage financial, political and educational support of this organization. As the immediate past Chairman and current Chairman of the Executive Committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, I can think of no better means to prepare future leaders to effectively navigate this emerging global world than the International Youth Initiative. I hope that you will agree.

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