MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

February 3, 2026

Michigan House Economic Competitiveness Committee
Anderson House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Members of the Michigan House Economic Competitiveness Committee,

I am writing to express strong support for House Bill 5031 on behalf of the Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Michigan State University.
The Burgess Institute is dedicated to helping MSU student entrepreneurs turn ideas into meaningful business ventures. We work closely with student founders to provide education, mentorship, and access to resources that help them move from concept to launch and beyond.

Our partnership with the Lansing Regional SmartZone plays a critical role in extending this support beyond the university. Through additional programming, access to incubator space, and connections to regional partners, the SmartZone helps student entrepreneurs engage with the broader innovation ecosystem, build stronger companies, and gain the exposure and experience needed to compete at a national and global level.

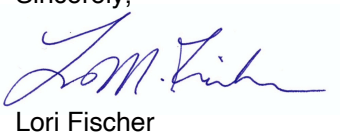
We regularly see the impact of this coordinated approach as student led ventures gain recognition, secure funding, and successfully enter competitive markets, reflecting the value of a regional network that brings together university programs, community partners, and economic development organizations to support entrepreneurship in Michigan.

House Bill 5031 would help ensure that the programs and partnerships supporting student founders and early stage companies can continue without interruption by allowing existing SmartZones to extend their tax increment financing authority. This continuity is essential to maintaining a clear pathway from classroom learning to company formation and long-term success.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for House Bill 5031 and for the continued investment in the systems that help student entrepreneurs and emerging companies grow, scale, and contribute to Michigan's future.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to entrepreneurship and innovation across our state.

Sincerely,



Lori Fischer
Director of Outreach and Engagement
Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Michigan State University

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