

March 25, 2026

Brian Stone
Acting Director
Erwin Gianchandani
Assistant Director for Technology
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Acting Director Stone and Assistant Director Gianchandani,

We write to express our strong support for the Critical Materials Crossroads Energy Materials Ecosystem (CMC-EME) proposal led by the University of Missouri Kansas City. This bi-state initiative represents an immediate and necessary investment to counter China's accelerating dominance in critical materials, rebuild vulnerable domestic supply chains, and prevent further erosion of the United States manufacturing capacity.

Missouri and Kansas are uniquely positioned to lead this effort. Our region has a long history of mining, manufacturing, and materials science excellence, paired with abundant mineral resources and a skilled workforce. The CMC-EME proposal brings together businesses, universities, technical schools, and community colleges to build on these strengths and turn the Kansas City region and broader Heartland into a national hub for critical materials development, processing, and advanced manufacturing.

UMKC's selection as one of 15 finalists for a National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engines award and the only finalist focused on critical materials underscores the strength and national relevance of this proposal. More than 150 partners from the industry, higher education, workforce development, and government have aligned behind a single objective: reducing America's reliance on foreign adversaries while creating high skilled jobs and economic growth in Missouri and Kansas.

The economic impact of this initiative is both substantial and already taking shape. An economic impact study conducted by the University of Missouri estimates that projects aligned with this regional critical materials strategy will generate \$40 billion in total economic output and increase the combined Missouri-Kansas GDP by \$17 billion. The initiative is projected to create more than 3,000 direct jobs and 6,000 indirect jobs, many located in rural and industrial communities that have been left behind by offshoring and foreign competition. These are high-quality, technology-focused manufacturing jobs that strengthen local economies, rebuild the domestic industrial base, and deliver lasting economic returns for taxpayers.

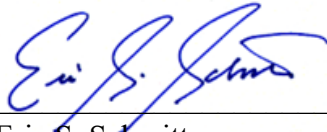
Today, more than 90% of critical materials used in batteries, motors, and microelectronics are imported into the United States, with the majority coming from China. This overreliance presents an active and growing vulnerability to U.S. national security and economic independence. At the same time, global competitors are moving aggressively to control downstream manufacturing and supply chains. The CMC-EME proposal directly responds to this threat by establishing a

domestic pipeline for critical materials needed for energy production, advanced manufacturing, and defense applications including jet engines, motors, and power generation equipment.

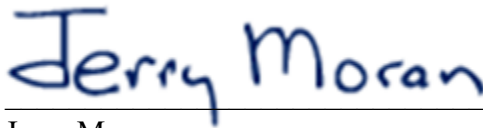
Missouri and Kansas are ready now, with existing assets, aligned partners, and deployable workforce pipelines capable of scaling domestic production without delay. By leveraging the region's mineral-rich geography, research capacity, and manufacturing expertise, this initiative will immediately strengthen domestic production, expand workforce training, and position the Heartland as a driver of American industrial leadership. The result is increased investment, job creation, and economic growth in the Kansas City region while delivering national security and supply-chain resilience benefits for the country as a whole.

We respectfully request the National Science Foundation's favorable consideration of the CMC-EME proposal led by the University of Missouri Kansas City. This project aligns with the mission of the Regional Innovation Engines program and represents a practical, market driven approach to strengthening American competitiveness, manufacturing, and national security.

Sincerely,



Eric S. Schmitt
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



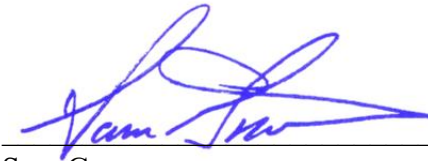
Mark Alford
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Sharice Davids
Member of Congress



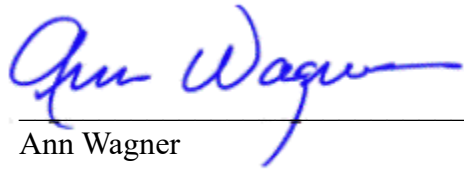
Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Bob Onder
Member of Congress



Jason Smith
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ann Wagner", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ann Wagner
Member of Congress