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The Honorable Debbie Dingell
102 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Dingell,

As always, the University of Michigan (U-M) appreciates your engagement on behalf of your constituents, and we value your partnership as U-M and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) work to address concerns and communicate clearly about the status of our high-performance computing facility – a project that deepens our longstanding research partnership to tackle some of today's most complex scientific and societal challenges.

U-M and LANL continue to evaluate sites for the proposed high-performance research computing facility – ***not*** a commercial data center – that would advance scientific discovery in areas such as cancer treatment, drug development, energy resilience, artificial intelligence and national security. We are pursuing this project to provide researchers with the computing capacity to solve the world's most complex challenges—from improving health outcomes and predicting extreme weather to strengthening the power grid and developing cleaner energy technologies.

The project remains in active due diligence, and no final site has been selected. U-M and LANL are evaluating two locations in Ypsilanti Township – Textile Road and Willow Run – that meet the technical and infrastructure requirements for this type of research facility. One reason why this selection process is taking longer than expected is because, at the urging of Ypsilanti Township Supervisor, Brenda Stumbo, we are conducting a deeper evaluation of the environmentally contaminated Willow Run site. We recognize that the absence of definitive technical details has contributed to community uncertainty; and as our evaluations proceed, we are committed to sharing accurate information as it becomes available via our U-M and LANL research partnership website[1] and frequently asked questions landing page[2].

1. Will the University of Michigan-Los Alamos data center be used to produce nuclear weapons?

No. The high-performance research computing facility will not be used to produce or store nuclear weapons. The facility will be dedicated entirely to scientific computational research.

[1] https://research.umich.edu/research-at-michigan/lanl/
[2] https://research.umich.edu/research-at-michigan/lanl-faq/

2. Will this data center have the capabilities to produce nuclear weapons?

No. The high-performance research computing facility will not have the capabilities to produce nuclear weapons. There will be no hazardous nuclear materials – including plutonium pits – on site, and no manufacturing of any kind.

3. How would this data center's "computational nuclear weapons modeling research" impact the advancement of nuclear military technology?

High-performance computing is one of many tools used by national laboratories to model and better understand complex scientific and engineering challenges, including aspects of nuclear security research. Computational modeling helps scientists analyze scenarios and assess system performance, but it is fundamentally different from manufacturing, testing or producing nuclear weapons. The high-performance research computing facility will allow scientists to tackle problems that are too complex for standard computers. By modeling, simulating, and analyzing massive data sets at lightning speed, this facility will enable discoveries in fields such as medicine, materials science, energy, engineering, and national security.

For example, U-M researchers are applying AI and high-performance computing to improve brain cancer surgery outcomes, accelerate drug discovery, and predict extreme weather events. Meanwhile, LANL scientists have used these tools to model wildfire behavior, track the spread of disease, and study changes in Arctic sea ice.

LANL's research at the high-performance computing facility could also address needs for its core mission of providing nuclear deterrence options for the U.S. military. While LANL's national security research is broader than many people realize and includes work such as strengthening the resilience of the U.S. power grid against cyber threats and improving critical infrastructure systems, high performance computing is an integral part of the way LANL undertakes national security and scientific and engineering research. In fact, LANL is currently expanding its computing facilities in Los Alamos to support next generation computers for these missions and is exploring options for future computing facilities as computational workload demands increase. Long-term plans beyond the next machine have not been finalized or budgeted for, however, it would be reasonable to assume computing facilities supported by the laboratory budgets are contributing to nuclear security.

4. Does the primary mission of this data center involve the production of materials needed to activate nuclear weapons?

No nuclear weapons materials will be produced or stored here. Further, there will be no manufacturing, production or storage of nuclear materials of any kind at the research facility, now or in the future.

5. Will this data center study nuclear defense capabilities?

LANL's supercomputers enable researchers to solve complex scientific challenges and bolster national security efforts in support of the National Nuclear Security Administration's mission. Nuclear security research at the high-performance computing facility could also address

needs for its national nuclear security mission. LANL is responsible for providing nuclear deterrent options for the U.S. military, to support U.S. security and defense.

6. Does the University of Michigan have contracts with the U.S. Department of War, previously known as the U.S. Department of Defense?

U-M has been a recipient of Department of Defense (DoD) research funding since the 1940's. The university partners with the DoD on high-impact research areas such as battery technology, AI-driven scientific discovery, and the landmark NCAA-DoD Concussion study. Additionally, the university hosts the National Security Innovation Network (NSIN), which links student and faculty innovators to real-world DoD security problems.

7. Will this data center store or handle hazardous materials?

No. The U-M/LANL high-performance computing facility will not store or handle hazardous materials.

8. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to protect Ypsilanti Township from the effects this data center will have on local energy demand?

From the project's inception, U-M/LANL have worked closely with DTE on the electrical needs for the high-performance computing facility. U-M's mandate to DTE was that the new facility must have its own adequate power supply and that no adjacent uses, at either of the subject sites, would be negatively impacted. That is why at either the Willow Run (either an upgrade to the existing substation or a new one) or the Textile/Bridge site (new substation), U-M will be compensating DTE for new infrastructure. There will be no negative impacts on local energy demand or rate increases associated with development at either site.

9. How will the University of Michigan and Los Alamos ensure that Ypsilanti Township residents do not face increased energy costs?

The state of Michigan is a regulated energy market, meaning that utility companies are governed by the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to set and approve electric rates. The MPSC's role is to ensure rates are fair and are in the public interest. Rates follow a "cost-of-service" model—meaning customers that cause the cost pay for those costs and are reflected in Michigan's different rate codes (residential, commercial, and industrial). Each class of customers pays the costs that the utility incurs to serve that class – ensuring residents and small businesses do not subsidize others' energy costs.

Utilities implement long-term contracts, and these requirements are legally enforceable and regulator-approved. To ensure the local power supply remains stable and unaffected, U-M is paying for the construction of a dedicated DTE substation specifically for this facility. By funding its own infrastructure, the project avoids placing a direct financial or technical burden on the local residential grid and ratepayers.

When the facility opens, we expect to initially use around 50 megawatts, and it will be several years before we ramp up to the 100-megawatt capacity being planned. The project also aligns with U-M's commitment to reach net-zero emissions for purchased electricity by 2027, as the university

has already secured large-scale solar power agreements to account for the center's academic energy needs. Facility designers are targeting LEED Silver certification — with a stretch goal of LEED Gold — through a fully electric building design and a solar-ready roof capable of supporting future renewable energy installations.

10. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to protect Ypsilanti Township from the effects this data center would have on local water demand?

While we originally planned to use evaporative cooling for the facility due to the ready availability of utility provided water by YCUA, we are now pivoting to and actively exploring the use of a closed loop cooling system rather than an evaporative cooling system. Such a system would drastically reduce or eliminate daily water consumption for cooling. The overall costs, benefits, and environmental impacts of both types of systems are being evaluated.

The facility will not draw or discharge into the Huron River or use local groundwater. U-M is also working in collaboration with the Huron River Watershed Council to ensure our water management aligns with regional conservation goals. All stormwater management and wetland protections must undergo formal review and permitting by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).

11. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to protect Ypsilanti Township from the noise pollution caused by data centers of this size?

The facility is designed for quiet operation, with noise and vibration levels expected to be similar to or lower than standard cooling equipment found on our campus and in typical office buildings throughout Michigan. Because the facility will be fully electric, it will not have noise sources such as combustion engines or other equipment commonly associated with industrial facilities. Similar to how an electric vehicle operates much more quietly than a gasoline-powered vehicle, the facility's systems are designed to minimize noise and blend into the existing ambient environment. Advanced cooling technology, engineered to blend into the existing ambient environment, will also be integrated into the facility.

12. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to address the burden that a data center of this size places on Ypsilanti Township and the project's tax-exempt status?

As a state university and a state instrumentality, U-M does not pay property taxes on its campus land. However, the University views itself as an integral part of the broader community, and looks forward to working with the township to identify investments that can help deliver concrete benefits across the community. The university has asked Ypsilanti Township officials for partnership opportunities, and we are waiting to hear back.

13. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to address the burden this project places on the Ypsilanti Township police and other emergency services and first Responders?

If the final site selected is within Ypsilanti Township, security for the project would be provided by U-M's Division of Public Safety and Security (DPSS) in coordination with Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, and the Michigan State Police. The site would

include an unobtrusive security perimeter and modern fire suppression systems. U-M recognizes that projects of this nature require close coordination with local and regional public safety partners. The University has an established history of collaborating with local, county, state, and federal agencies to support public safety operations and emergency response. Local emergency services would be engaged only when necessary, and the state's fire protection grant program that is used statewide is available to provide reimbursement for fire service costs to the Township. The grant provides funds to local communities, on a per-square-foot basis, to help cover the cost of fire protection for state facilities, including university buildings.

U-M DPSS responds to incidents occurring on University property; however, when University facilities are located within another law enforcement jurisdiction, the local agency having primary jurisdiction remains the primary responding agency unless otherwise defined through mutual aid or operational agreements. DPSS routinely works alongside these agencies to provide support, coordinate resources, and ensure an effective response.

As project planning continues, additional discussions with Ypsilanti Township, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, Ypsilanti Township Fire Department, along with regional fire and EMS agencies, the Michigan State Police, and other public safety partners will be necessary to formally define response protocols, operational responsibilities, resource requirements, communications procedures, and mutual aid expectations. Developing these coordinated plans will help minimize impacts on local agencies while ensuring an appropriate and scalable public safety response.

14. What will the University of Michigan and Los Alamos do to ensure the safety of Ypsilanti Township residents based on the project's classification as a "Tier 1 High Value Target Risk?"

Neither U-M, LANL, nor any state or federal agency has classified the proposed high-performance research computing center as a "Tier 1 High Value Target Risk". Rather, that terminology originated in Charter Township of Ypsilanti Board of Trustees Resolution 2026-05 and related correspondence[3] from the township attorney.

The use of this term by the township attorney should not be interpreted to mean there is a known, specific or imminent threat to the facility or the surrounding community. The proposed facility is a scientific research center, not a military installation, weapons production facility or site that would house hazardous nuclear materials.

Like many major research institutions, the facility would employ appropriate security measures, including controlled, badged access, cameras and on-site security personnel, while maintaining the collaborative nature of a university setting. U-M would also continue coordinating with local, state and federal partners to support the safety of both the facility and the surrounding community.

15. If the University of Michigan and Los Alamos move forward with the Willow Run location for this project, what are the plans for the property purchased on Textile Road?

As this project is in an active due-diligence phase, and no final site has been selected, there are no plans for future use of U-M's property on Textile Road at this time.

[3]https://files.ypsitownship.org/_news/Data-Center/Letter-to-Board-McLain-Winters-UM-Los-Alamos-Land-Purchase-2026-03-18.pdf?t=202603181518380&t=202603181518380

16. In a June 2026 article, a representative of the University of Michigan stated that "the University continues to evaluate multiple factors and sites related to the project." What are the sites the University is considering for this project?

This project is in an active due-diligence phase, and no final site has been selected. Following an extensive initial review, U-M is continuing to evaluate two potential sites in Ypsilanti Township: a site that is west of the Willow Run Airport and a site located near Textile and Bridge roads. The potential sites under review are zoned appropriately by Ypsilanti Township and meet the project's technical and infrastructure requirements. U-M is conducting a good-faith review of both locations to find the best fit.

17. A December 2024 memo to the Michigan Strategic Fund Board states that "the project will be located on a 20-acre property in Ypsilanti Township." The Textile Road property purchased for this project is 124 acres. Why has the project expanded since the original Planning?

The project itself has not expanded. The additional acreage was acquired to provide flexibility for locating the electrical infrastructure needed to support the facility after the original plan for a separate substation site proved infeasible. The size of the property would allow U-M and LANL to create a site plan to maximize distance from nearby parks and protect natural features.

When the project was first conceptualized and the Textile Road site was identified, U-M reached out to DTE to determine what the electrical needs would be for the U-M/LANL high-performance computing facility, and the need for a new substation was established. DTE identified a 6-acre parcel of land at 6630 Rawsonville Road that would be suitable for such a substation. U-M Regents voted in October 2024 to approve the +/- 20-acre site at 10221 Textile Road and the 6630 Rawsonville Road parcel. At the time, it was U-M's intention to build the research facility on the 20-acre site and the substation on the 6-acre site on Rawsonville Road.

However, in early 2025, additional due diligence associated with the project determined that the Rawsonville Road site would not work for the new substation. Therefore, adjacent property owned by Norfolk Railroad was pursued. In June 2025, the U-M Regents voted to approve the 124-acre parcel.

18. Why was Ypsilanti Township selected as the site of this project?

U-M first explored building this facility on campus in Ann Arbor, but existing campus properties do not have the necessary infrastructure. Specifically, any selected site must feature direct access to high-capacity electrical infrastructure (near a main transmission line), proximity to a municipal water system with sufficient capacity, and links to crucial utilities like data lines and sanitary sewers. Additionally, the location must offer adequate acreage to accommodate the building, an on-site DTE electrical substation and necessary infrastructure support, while also leaving enough space to preserve natural features and community buffer zones.

The two sites in Ypsilanti Township are being considered because they meet these technical requirements and have already been zoned and designated for "light industrial" use by the township.

19. What benefits will the University of Michigan and Los Alamos provide to the community hosting this data center?

It is important to clarify again that this is not a commercial data center. It is a high-performance research computing facility. Once a site is selected, U-M will work with local leaders and residents to identify opportunities to provide meaningful long-term value to the Ypsilanti Township area community. Examples of such U-M community investments were highlighted in a recent press release[4] and news article[5]. U-M views itself as an integral part of the broader community, and the University looks forward to working with the township to identify investments that can help deliver concrete benefits across the community.

20. The project has been referred to as an "economic development magnet." How would this project attract economic opportunities for Ypsilanti Township? What start-ups or high-tech businesses, potential tenants, and collaborators have expressed interest in Ypsilanti Township because of this project?

The project is expected to create approximately 300 union construction jobs, more than 200 high-paying permanent research positions, and 30–50 technical support roles. The center also has the potential to strengthen regional economic development by attracting additional research activity, businesses, and investment to the area.

For Michigan residents, the facility represents a $1.25 billion investment in scientific discovery and advanced research infrastructure. Research conducted at the center will help accelerate breakthroughs in areas such as medicine and energy, while creating new opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and high-skilled careers across the state.

The partnership between U-M and LANL will help position Michigan as a national leader in advanced computing and scientific research, helping to create a pipeline of talent for the State of Michigan, and creating opportunities for students, researchers, and workers to contribute to cutting-edge discoveries without leaving the state.

Currently, U-M is among the very highest-performing universities in the country for startup creation. By expanding research opportunities and the pathways we have built to help move discoveries from the lab into the world, we are poised to advance new medical devices, therapeutics, clean energy, mobility, space technologies, inclusive health and wellness, and other areas of urgent need. These are the startups that will become Michigan success stories 5, 10, and 15 years from now, delivering breakthroughs that improve lives, strengthen our economy, and extend the positive impact of U-M research far beyond campus.

21. What are the University of Michigan and Los Alamos doing to address the lack of transparency surrounding this project and better communicate with the Ypsilanti Township?

From the outset, the university has committed to following a careful, transparent, and data-driven process – and U-M shares project updates with the public as information becomes available. As we have shared previously, the project remains in the due diligence stage. Because many technical aspects of the project – including final building design, utility connections, infrastructure

[4] https://www.a2gov.org/news/posts/university-of-michigan-contributes-126m-to-city-of-ann-arbor-projects/
[5] https://record.umich.edu/articles/u-m-contributes-over-32m-to-ann-arbor-local-communities/

requirements and site-specific environmental considerations – depend on the selection of a preferred site, there are details that cannot yet be definitively answered. We recognize that the absence of final technical details has contributed to community uncertainty, and as our evaluations proceed, we are committed to sharing accurate information as soon as it becomes available via our U-M and LANL research partnership website[6] and frequently asked questions landing page[7]. As interest in the project has grown, we understand the importance of ensuring that information shared is accessible to the broader community, and we are committed to expanding opportunities for direct public engagement. The university is developing a plan to better inform the community of the project's status and will continue providing updates and opportunities for community input as the evaluation moves forward. Interested neighbors may email us directly at hpc-center@umich.edu.

Thank you again for bringing these concerns forward. We appreciate your constructive engagement and look forward to continued collaboration. Please let us know if you have any additional questions or if you would like to connect to discuss any of the information provided.

Sincerely,

Dominico Grasso
President
University of Michigan

Thom Mason
Director
Los Alamos National Laboratory

[6] https://research.umich.edu/research-at-michigan/lanl/
[7] https://research.umich.edu/research-at-michigan/lanl-faq/