March 6, 2023

Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: George Mason University Community Project Proposal for Center for AI Innovation for Economic Competitiveness**

Dear Senators Kaine and Warner,

I am writing this letter in support of the George Mason University Community Project Proposal for a first-in-the-nation Center for AI Innovation for Economic Competitiveness.

In close collaboration with the business community, the Center will a) develop a For-Virginia AI Strategy; (b) track Virginia's business AI adoption rate; (c) offer programs to SMEs to understand, capitalize, and innovate on emerging and disruptive AI technologies, such as ChatGPT and other generative AI technologies; and (d) expand the talent pipeline through employee training, reskilling and upskilling in AI technologies, with particular attention paid to underserved communities.

We are fully in support of this initiative as we believe it can address key issues related to state economic competitiveness. Several US states have been ardent regard AI markets, but the Commonwealth can and should be more proactive as the AI market is rapidly expanding, both globally and in the US. The Biden administration, with Senate leadership and guidance provided by Senators Warner and Kaine, aims to galvanize states and communities to capitalize on technologies of the future. The proposed Center will be critical to the Commonwealth's capitalizing on both emerging and disruptive AI technologies, such as ChatGPT and others. The state is uniquely positioned for this effort having powerful technology and education sectors and enabling infrastructure for data communications and storage, demonstrated recently by the expansion of data centers across the Commonwealth. The Center's goals comprehensively address technology development and adoption by small and medium sized enterprises, who are the drivers of the Virginia economy, and include critical workforce development and economic opportunity elements.

George Mason University also has the unique experience and expertise to successfully undertake, develop, and operate the Center, leveraging several colleges, institutes, and centers that bring together the much-needed expertise in AI innovation, workforce, and economic development both to successfully implement and execute this community project and sustain it in the long term.

We are very excited about this community project proposal and are looking forward to the opportunity to work with this team.


Sincerely,

Kate Bates
President & CEO