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We appreciate your joining us today. As Presidents and Chancellors of Michigan’s State Universities, we have executive responsibility for a human resource where over a quarter of a million people seek to improve their lives. Their success, we believe, will determine the direction and quality of life in our state. You can appreciate, I am sure, that we have strong feelings about the investment Michigan makes in its Universities, and this forum gives us an opportunity to tell you the reasons for our feelings. We hope what we believe and say will "ring true" for you, and you too will have a greater understanding of our Universities and sense we are on the stump, moving through our beautiful state telling our story, here in Grand Rapids, in Lansing, in Detroit, and in Marquette.

To introduce our two colleagues who will present the case for public higher education, the President of Ferris State University, one of the three host institutions today, Dr. Helen Popovich.