

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

August 18, 2006

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Over the past ten days, we have been reminded, once again, of both the challenges and the hope in Michigan's economy.

Auto suppliers Avon Automotive, Martinrea and Gestamp US Hardtech announced expansions creating and retaining nearly 2,000 jobs.

But at the same time, the loss of manufacturing jobs and trade policies that force our workers to compete on an uneven playing field have pushed unemployment higher, reminding us of the long road we have traveled and the miles we've got left to go.

Why does our unemployment rate continue to seesaw up and down?

Because we are a state challenged by a global economy. We're a manufacturing state, we're impacted by trade agreements we don't negotiate and we can't enforce. We are a state more closely connected to the automotive industry than any other state in the country, and we're more directly affected when they struggle.

That's why I will continue to call on President Bush to make time to meet with the leaders of our Big 3, to negotiate trade agreements that are fair and enforceable, and to develop a uniquely American solution to the health care burden that prevents our manufacturers from truly being competitive.

And that's why I have developed and am implementing the most comprehensive economic plan of any state in the country.

It's the right plan for Michigan because it puts people first.

My economic plan invests in the things that matter – in our schools, in our health care, and in diversifying Michigan's economy.

We are fighting to protect the jobs we have, while diversifying the economy in cutting edge technologies like life sciences, alternative energy and homeland security and defense.

I know it's the right plan for Michigan every time I talk to a parent worried about paying for college and I can tell them about my \$4,000 new Merit Award scholarship.

Or when I meet a worker who's received training through our MI Opportunity Partnership or a farmer whose crop is now producing ethanol at the local plant.

Next week, I will be on the road once again talking to workers, parents and families.

We'll talk about the challenges ... and the hope.

I'll share my plan with them - and my commitment to fight for them, fight for their pocketbooks and to fight for their children's future.

Thank you for listening.