

3rd Conference on Advanced Automotive Powertrain & Energy Resources conference (Robert A. Ficano)

First of all, I would like to thank the Society of Automobile Engineers of China for inviting me to speak at the 3rd Conference on Advanced Automotive Powertrain & Energy Resources conference. I would also like to congratulate the Society for organizing such an elaborate international conference.

I am the Chief Executive of Wayne County, and our headquarters are in our largest city, Detroit. Wayne County is the largest County in the State of Michigan and the eleventh largest in the United States, including 33 cities and 10 townships. Wayne County is the birth place of the automobile industry, where Ford Motor Company, General Motors, and Chrysler and several of their divisions started their operations. Wayne County has the largest annual auto show in the United States and is also the host of the annual Society of Automotive Engineers conference. For the first time, a China made automobile, Geely, was exhibited this year and received very good media attention.

Because of our strength in the auto industry, and other auto-affiliated industries, it is only natural for Wayne County government and the companies of our region actively to participate in China. Since China is now a member of the World Trade Organization, and the fact that its auto industry has made tremendous progress in recent years, we value its contribution for economic and trade partnerships. We are interested not only in the auto industry but in the field of alternative energy. As the demand for petroleum increases, the resources available will not be able to meet the increasing demands – and Wayne County has committed resources to create alternative energy and our auto producers are also making new automobiles that would use energy other than petroleum.

Wayne County has developed business partnership agreements with several Chinese cities and we are opening 3 offices to ensure that our governments and companies can fully exploit the trade and investment opportunities in a manner that would equally help Wayne County and our partnership cities in China. I am glad to inform you that the Tempo Group, one of the largest automobile parts and vehicle producers, have opened a Research and Development and distribution center in Wayne County. We are at present assisting five Chinese companies to open up offices.

I am leading a trade delegation of about 25 individuals representing several organizations and companies. We are exploring joint-venture opportunities in the auto industry, seeking Chinese investors to do business in the Wayne County, air cargo through the Detroit Metro International airport and Willow Run airport, the only cargo-dedicated airport in the United States, and Detroit ports. Some 65% of the trade between the United States and Canada goes through Wayne County. The International Crossing by air, train, and trucks goes through Wayne County and, therefore, we can serve as the port of entry for your goods and services.

Again, thank you for inviting me, and I wish you a very successful conference and a 2006 Beijing International Automotive Exhibition.