

Michigan township Green Charter votes out its entire local government over China-linked EV battery maker Gotion's plan to build a factory there

- Green Charter Township's five board members were removed in recall election
- They were ousted for backing Gotion's new \$2.3 billion EV battery plant
- Gotion's parent company is 30% owned by Volkswagen, but is based in China

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PUBLISHED: 02:56 AEDT, 10 November 2023 | UPDATED: 06:00 AEDT, 10 November 2023

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The entire local government of a small Michigan township was voted out this week, in a recall election over concerns about a Chinese-affiliated company's plans to build an electric vehicle battery plant nearby.

In a special election on Tuesday, Green Charter Township's five incumbent board members, who are all Republicans, were voted out in favor of candidates who ran without any party affiliation.

Hours after the vote, the town's new leaders wasted no time, changing the locks on the township's main government building, according to NewsNation National Correspondent Brian Entin.

The community of just 3,219 residents leans Republican, and the surrounding county voted in favor of Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election by a margin of 22 percentage points.

The petition that launched the recall election accused town officials of ignoring voter concerns over China-linked company Gotion's plan to open a \$2.3 billion EV plant there, which is expected to create 2,350 jobs.

Although it is backed by Volkswagen with operations in Germany, Gotion's parent company is based in China, and has been accused of having links to the country's Communist Party.



Voters in Green Charter Township, Michigan, on Tuesday recalled all five town board members (circled) over their support of a Chinese-affiliated company's plans for a battery plant



Green Charter's new board swiftly called in a locksmith to change the locks on the main government building

Residents of Michigan township change locks after ousting board



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On Wednesday, NewsNation's Entin reported live from the town's empty government building, after the incumbents hastily packed up their belongings.

'This is something Americans all across the country almost fantasize about, booting out their local government if they don't like them and they're not getting the job done,' he told host Elizabeth Vargas on Elizabeth Vargas Reports.

In ousting Green Charter's town board, voters in the community also sent a message to President **Joe Biden**, who has touted **EV plants and other clean energy projects** as key to his economic growth plans.

China is a leader in the global supply chain for advanced batteries and other green technology, raising thorny questions about what kind of impact partnerships in that arena will have on US interests.

Gotion's plans for the Michigan plant, and another in Illinois, have drawn scrutiny from congressional Republicans, who urged the Treasury Department to conduct a security review over Gotion's purported ties to China's Communist Party.

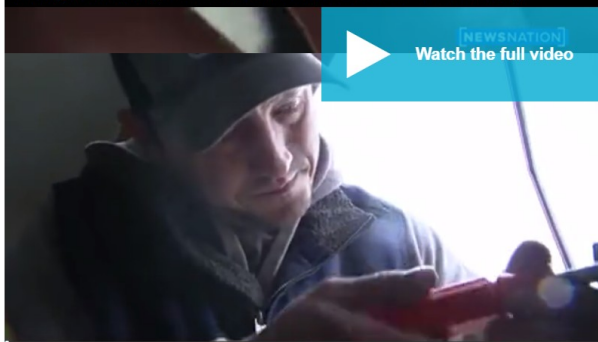
Public filings indicate that Gotion, headquartered in Fremont, California, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Gotion High-Tech Co, Ltd, a multinational based in Hefei, China.

Gotion High-Tech's **articles of association**, last updated in 2022, state that the company shall maintain a Chinese Communist Party unit tasked with 'the implementation of the Party's guidelines, principles and policies in the Company'.

The company has publicly denied allegiance to the Communist Party, but China has moved in recent years to enhance the CCP's influence in Chinese firms, where maintaining a party unit is often required under law.

Gotion did not respond to a request for comment from DailyMail.com, but told NewsNation: 'We are a multinational company and don't believe in political posturing and are still committed to bringing thousands of jobs to the state of Michigan.'

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© Michigan Economic Development Corporation
A rendering shows the planned Gotion battery plant in Michigan. The company plans to invest \$2.3 billion in the plant and create 2,350 new jobs

In Green Charter, local residents said they were concerned about the planned Gotion plant's possible communist connections.

'My family members fought communism, and you're bringing it right here,' one unnamed voter told NewsNation.

Resident Corri Riebow, who has no experience in politics, ran for town clerk in the recall election, defeating incumbent Janet Clark.

'We just plan on making it as difficult as possible for them to continue their process,' Riebow said of the new board's attitude toward Gotion.

'They don't even have a site planned, they don't have permits yet, so we're not their friend,' she added.

Also voted out in the recall were Supervisor Jim Chapman, Treasurer Denise MacFarlane, and Trustees Roger E. Carroll and Dale Jernstadt.

In September, Republican Senator Marco Rubio and Republican representatives from Michigan and Illinois sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, urging the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to review Gotion's ties to China's Communist Party.



Resident Corri Riebow (above), who has no experience in politics, ran for town clerk in the recall election, defeating incumbent Janet Clark



Voters at a watch party celebrate as the results of the recall election are announced

The lawmakers claimed that despite Germany's Volkswagen AG being the largest single shareholder at about 30 percent of Gotion's parent company, Gotion High-Tech, China maintained 'effective control' through multiple individual shareholders.

Those include the company's founder Li Zhen and his son whom, they said, were members of CCP organizations.

Most of Gotion High-Tech's other top shareholders, they wrote, were owned by Chinese government-linked entities, and its bylaws vow to implement the major strategic decisions of the party.

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That should trigger the review, and if necessary, Gotion High-Tech's divestment, the lawmakers said, especially since Biden has identified electric vehicles and batteries as critical parts of transportation infrastructure.

'It is not in the interest of the United States to allow the CCP to control facilities estimated to produce thousands of those batteries, much less to provide it with hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer funded subsidies to do so,' they said.

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 The battery company is owned by China...ok...the towns people did not want a Chinese owned battery factory in their town
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