

Michigan Chamber Leads Successful Fight On Key Business Climate Issues During Final Days Of Legislative Session

LANSING, Mich., Dec. 15, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Michigan Legislature ended the 2015-2016 legislative session on a high note with passage of critical legislation to ensure Michigan's energy future, says the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. Revising and updating Michigan's energy policy to strengthen the state's competitiveness was a top legislative priority for the Michigan Chamber.

"Job providers and residents alike need energy laws that ensure a reliable system at cost effective rates," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Rich Studley. "SB 437 is a fair and balanced compromise that successfully addresses three key issues: sustaining customer choice; implementing meaningful competitive bidding; and improving reliability for all Michigan ratepayers."

"We appreciate and applaud the leadership of Governor Snyder, State Senator Mike Nofs and State Representative Aric Nesbitt whose tireless efforts led to the formulation of a bi-partisan solution to Michigan's energy needs," Studley added.

"Having a modern and updated energy law is a key driver to Michigan's economic competitiveness," noted Jason Geer, Director of Energy & Environmental Policy for the Michigan Chamber. "Safe, affordable and reliable energy is crucial to Michigan's ability to grow our economy and create jobs."

"We are confident that passage of energy reform legislation will help ensure Michigan is prepared to compete in the global economy," added Geer.

While the Michigan Chamber helped secure passage of energy reform legislation, the Chamber also led the fight to defeat a variety of job-killing bills that could have seen action in the final days of session. Job-killing proposals that were blocked include:

- House Bill 4829 and Senate Bill 1127 – these bills were drafted to mandate suburban employers to become local income tax collectors for cities even though the businesses have no connection to the cities levying the income tax. The bills would have added huge administrative burdens, liability and audits onto unsuspecting employers and the bills were rightly rejected due to the Michigan Chamber's strong opposition.
- House Bill 5578 – this legislation would have imposed a hidden property tax increase by upending Michigan's property tax assessment and appeals process. This bill was a local government scheme to tie the hands of the Michigan Tax Tribunal when hearing property tax appeals, thereby giving a green light for local governments to over-assess property values. The Michigan Chamber strongly opposed this bill; it was defeated.
- Senate Bill 625 – this bill was a job-killing mandated health insurance benefit, a la Obamacare. If passed, this bill would have implemented government price controls over the cost of certain high-cost, specialty drugs. This unwarranted injection of pricing mandates would have backfired, resulting in higher health insurance premiums for employers.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 6,700 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber represents businesses of every size and type in all 83 counties of the state. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process. It is one of only six state chambers accredited by the U.S. Chamber and one of only four state chambers accredited with distinction.

SOURCE Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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