

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Asks Court of Appeals To Protect Safe, Drug-Free Workplace

LANSING, Mich., March 11, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Employers maintaining drug-free workplace policies should not be forced to accommodate an employee's use of medical marijuana, says the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, who filed an amicus curiae brief with the Michigan Court of Appeals in ***Braska v. State of Michigan***.

The Michigan Chamber Litigation Center is asking the Court of Appeals to overturn a ruling by the Kent County Circuit Court, which awarded unemployment benefits to an employee, after he was fired for a drug violation, because he was a medical marijuana user.

"The Michigan Chamber is seeking a reversal of the lower court's decision because it puts employers in a no-win situation," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Rich Studley. "If the Circuit Court's ruling is allowed to stand employers will be forced to either ignore known drug use and jeopardize workplace safety or discharge those employees and pay their unemployment benefits and, subsequently, higher unemployment taxes."

"The Court must decide whether or not the law allows medical marijuana users to intentionally violate their employer's drug policy and then receive special treatment by being awarded unemployment benefits," said Jim Holcomb, Senior Vice President for Business Advocacy & General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber. "This precedent setting case is critically important to job providers across Michigan and we will continue to stand up for them by championing the position that employers' must retain the right to enforce zero-tolerance drug policies."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 6,500 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. Michigan Chamber member businesses provide jobs to 1.5 million residents. One of every 2.6 employees in Michigan works for a Chamber member firm. 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

For further information: Jim Holcomb, General Counsel, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, (517) 371-2100

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