

More Than 20 Business Organizations Urge Legislative Leaders, Governor Granholm to Balance the State Budget by Reducing Spending

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More than 20 trade associations and chambers of commerce urged legislative leaders and Governor Granholm to balance the state budget by reducing spending at a press conference held today at the State Capitol.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000320/DEM039>)

"The current economic slowdown has hit the private sector in Michigan very hard," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Jim Barrett. "Across the state, businesses are cutting expenses while employees are being challenged to do more with less. The Governor and legislative leaders have indicated that the state needs to take the same approach to balance the state budget and we're here today to show support for that approach."

According to a recent statewide public opinion poll, 77% of Michigan voters say cut state government spending to balance the budget, while 87% say the overall level of taxes is too high or about right, and 41% say they would be less likely to vote for a legislator who raises taxes.

"We are here today on behalf of tens of thousands of job providers to indicate that the organizations we represent will be actively involved in the upcoming debate over how to balance the state budget," Barrett added.

The members of the business coalition are in agreement on the following two points:

- * State government's budget must be brought back into line by reducing spending.
- * No new or increased taxes on individuals or business.

Speaking on behalf of NFIB-Michigan, Assistant State Director Andrew J. Deloney said, "It's clear from NFIB's study of Michigan and other states that the state governments that have budget deficits have a spending problem. And the best solution to that problem is to cut spending. Any tax increase on individuals or business would hurt small businesses that are struggling to survive."

Speaking on behalf of the service sector, Jack McManus, COO of UNIBAR Maintenance Services, said, "If, instead of cutting spending, the Legislature expanded the sales tax to services, I would have to lay people off." UNIBAR is located in Ann Arbor and employs 500+ people.

Twenty-three trade associations and chambers of commerce have come together to support balancing the state budget by reducing spending. Following is the list of coalition members.

BUSINESS COALITION MEMBERS

Affiliated Building Services Contractors in Michigan
Brewers Association of America
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce
Michigan Association of Home Builders
Michigan Bankers Association
Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association
Michigan Brewers Guild
Michigan Business & Professional Association
Michigan Chamber of Commerce
Michigan Distributors & Vendors Association
Michigan Food & Beverage Association
Michigan Grocers Association
Michigan Licensed Beverage Association
Michigan Movers Association
Michigan Restaurant Association

Michigan Retailers Association
Michigan Retail Hardware Association
Midwest Carwash Association
National Federation of Independent Business - MI
Outdoor Advertising Association of MI
Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM)
The Beer Institute

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