

Michigan Business Organizations Welcome Mackinac Center Ideas to Balance the State Budget Without Raising Taxes

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A group of statewide business organizations today welcomed the Mackinac Center for Public Policy's detailed analysis and suggestions to balance the state budget without raising taxes. The Mackinac Center released its study titled, "Recommendations to Strengthen Civil Society and Balance Michigan's State Budget -- 2nd Edition," at a press conference held today at the State Capitol. The study provides over 90 ideas and suggestions to reduce spending and generate revenue.

"The Mackinac Center's study provides a broad range of recommendations that we believe have not been fully considered by the legislature and administration," noted Tricia Kinley, Director of Tax Policy & Economic Development for the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, one of eight statewide organizations represented at the news conference. "Some have claimed that state government has 'cut to the bone.' This document demonstrates that this is not the case."

"In bringing a market-based framework to the discussion, the Mackinac Center has identified state services that the private sector is better able to provide, as well as opportunities to introduce market mechanisms to improve programs that only state government can provide," said Matthew J. Hanley, Director of Government Relations for the Michigan Bankers Association.

"When government raises taxes on business, they don't ask the owner where they are going to get the extra money to pay the taxes," observed Keith Carey, Small Business Lobbyist/Advocate, National Federation of Independent Business - Michigan. "We are at least trying to help our lawmakers with suggestions to reduce spending."

"The Mackinac Center study provides a comprehensive 'menu' of options that the legislature and the administration should consider as part of their budget process," said Barry S. Cargill, Vice President of Government Relations for the Small Business Association of Michigan. "There are over \$4.2 billion worth of ideas in this study. Even if legislators and the administration implemented just one-third of them, we could have a balanced state budget without tax increases."

"We were pleased to see the 'death' and liquor tax votes go down to resounding bipartisan defeat," said Andy J. Deloney, Director, Public Affairs for the Michigan Restaurant Association. "But it is still early in the budget process and these ideas could be considered in their deliberations. Businesses know how to get through tough budget times ... they reduce expenditures and look for ways to be more efficient. We encourage legislators and the administration to do the same."

Business organizations that participated in the press conference include:

Michigan Association of Home Builders
Dawn Crandall - 517/322-0224

Auto Dealers of Michigan, LLC
Peter A. Kuhnmuensch - 517/492-2886

Michigan Bankers Association
Matt Hanley - 517/485-3600

Michigan Chamber of Commerce
Tricia Kinley - 517/371-2100

Michigan Grocers Association
Linda Gobler - 517/ 372-6800

Michigan Restaurant Association
Andy Deloney - 517/482-5244

National Federation of Independent Business - MI

Keith Carey - 517/485-3409

Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM)
Barry Cargill - 517/482-8788

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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