State House Abandoned Common Sense In Rush To Approve $1.98 Billion Health Insurance Tax Increase On Individuals And Business, Says Michigan Chamber Of Commerce

LANSING, Mich., Dec. 8, 2015 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today issued the following statement in response to State House passage of House Bill 5105 (Pscholka) – a $1.98 billion tax increase on individuals and business purchasing health insurance.

"Michigan is the only state in the country that imposes a penalty tax on individuals and businesses that purchase health insurance," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Rich Studley. "Under current law, the state health insurance claims assessment ("HICA" tax) is scheduled to end on December 31, 2017. By extending this tax another seven years and nine months, the State House in effect imposed nearly $2 billion in additional taxes on individuals and business."

"The sole purpose of this $2 billion money grab is to increase the size and cost of state government to pay for social welfare programs," added Studley. "We are extremely disappointed that Republicans in the State House would abandon common sense and conservative principles to hastily pass this anti-taxpayer and anti-business bill."

"Today, the State House voted to put the HICA tax on auto pilot through the 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 general elections," continued Studley. "This self-serving attempt to escape legislative accountability for a massive increase in government spending is an insult to taxpayers, job providers and voters across the state."

"We strongly urge the Michigan Senate to oppose and kill this giant tax hike," Studley concluded.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 6,800 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.

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