Michigan Chamber of Commerce Applauds House Passage Of Legislation To Strengthen And Improve DEQ Rulemaking And Permit Process

LANSING, Mich., May 22, 2018 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today issued the following statement in response to House passage of much-needed legislation to strengthen and improve administrative rulemaking at the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Expanding openness, accountability and transparency at the DEQ is a top legislative priority for the Michigan Chamber.

"We applaud the Michigan House for passing Senate Bills 652-654 to require more stakeholder involvement earlier in the DEQ rulemaking process," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Rich Studley. "These DEQ reform bills will change rulemaking from a bureaucratic process to a more open process with participation by a wide range of stakeholders."

"The DEQ reform bills will create a more cooperative rulemaking process, where stakeholders and DEQ staff will have more meaningful interactions that produce better policy outcomes," noted Jason Geer, Director of Energy & Environmental Policy for the Michigan Chamber. "Both the Science Advisory Board and the permit appeal panel will ensure that DEQ decisions are focused on the science rather than personal opinions or politics."

SBs 652-654 establishes a diverse 12-member stakeholder committee – representing environmental, conservation, local governments, public health, the general public, public utilities, small business, manufacturers, solid waste, oil and gas, and agriculture – with the power to review all proposed environmental rules and make recommendations on whether to move the rules forward. The legislation also creates a permit appeal board with members selected by the DEQ director and reestablishes the environmental science review board to ensure the protection of citizens from environmental threats.

"We strongly encourage the State Senate to concur on this package of bills to keep our state moving forward," Studley said."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing over 6,000 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce who employ over one million Michigan residents. 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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Strengthen-And-Improve-DEQ-Rulemaking-And-Permit-Process