

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Strongly Opposed to Union Plan to Stop Reinventing Michigan

LANSING, Mich., May 2, 2012 [PRNewswire/](#) -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has voted unanimously to strongly oppose the so-called "Protect Our Jobs" ballot proposal which seeks to amend the Michigan Constitution to: create a new right to collective bargaining; retroactively repeal dozens of cost-saving reform measures; and ban right-to-work legislation before such bills have even been introduced.

"The only jobs that would be protected by this partisan petition drive belong to the union bosses who are bankrolling this attempt to stop reinventing Michigan," said Rich Studley, President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. "Now is the time to keep Michigan moving forward. We must not turn back the clock to the days of big government and big labor."

"This anti-taxpayer petition drive is squarely aimed at repealing dozens and dozens of cost-saving reform measures recently enacted by Gov. Snyder and the Michigan Legislature," noted Jim Holcomb, Senior Vice President, Business Advocacy & General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber. "Across the nation, Michigan is increasingly being recognized as a leader in government efficiency and reform for enacting common sense solutions to government spending, but this proposal is a power grab by government employee unions who want to maintain the status quo without regard for the Michigan taxpayers footing the bill.

"The Michigan Chamber doesn't currently have a position for or against right-to-work," Holcomb added. "However, the idea that a special interest group would amend the state constitution to cut off debate about legislation it doesn't like is unfair and unwise."

"Proponents of this proposal have said their intent is to stop 80 laws from being implemented, but they have refused to publicly disclose exactly which cost-saving reform measures they intend to repeal," said Wendy Block, Director of Health Policy & Human Resources for the Michigan Chamber. "Don't be fooled into signing a blank check. This petition drive is another attempt to reach into taxpayer wallets to fund costly government employee benefits, especially health care and pensions that are not available in the private sector and are unsustainable and unaffordable."

Studley concluded: "Government employee unions have declared war on our state's economic competitiveness with this deceptive and counterproductive ballot proposal. Michigan's job providers did not ask for this fight. But we will do whatever it takes to defeat the union's plan to stop reinventing Michigan."

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 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 four state chambers of commerce in the nation accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

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