Michigan Chamber of Commerce Supports Responsible Energy Exploration; Opposes Job-Killing Petition Drive to Ban Hydraulic Fracturing in Michigan

LANSING, Mich., May 8, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has voted unanimously to support responsible oil and gas exploration in Michigan and to oppose any attempt to ban the use of hydraulic fracturing, including a false and misleading petition drive now underway by irresponsible environmental groups.

"In-state production of oil and gas benefits Michigan, our communities and families in many ways," said Rich Studley, President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber. "It enables energy security, supports thousands of Michigan jobs and generates millions of dollars in tax revenue for public services at the state and local level, in addition to royalties for Michigan's Natural Resources Trust Fund.

"The dangerous petition drive to ban hydraulic fracturing is based on emotion, not sound science, and worse yet, it is a direct attack by environmental extremists on a key industry that provides good jobs and energy independence for our state," Studley added.

"In Michigan, hydraulic fracturing has been used for over 50 years without a single negative impact on human health or the environment," noted Jason Geer, Director of Energy & Environmental Policy for the Michigan Chamber. "With over 12,000 wells drilled using this technique, hydraulic fracturing has clearly been proven safe.

"Our state is uniquely positioned to benefit from continued responsible exploration for natural gas since we have a substantial amount of shale gas waiting to be recovered and the ability to store a larger amount than other states," added Geer.

"Current state regulation of oil and gas exploration in Michigan is tough but fair, and that's the way it should be," said Jim Holcomb, Senior Vice President for Business Advocacy & General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber.

"In November of last year, Michigan voters overwhelmingly rejected an attempt by out-of-state interests with a national agenda to set energy policy by petition drive," continued Holcomb. "We're confident that when presented with the facts about oil and gas exploration in Michigan, voters will once again reject the dangerous ballot proposal."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 6,400 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. 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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