Michigan Chamber Of Commerce Launches Statewide Campaign To Protect Michigan's Energy Future

LANSING, Mich., Aug. 5, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today announced the launch of a statewide voter education campaign, called "Protect Michigan's Energy Future." The campaign includes billboards, posted across the state, as well as a website (www.michamber.com/energyindependence) to help educate voters about the benefits of energy production in Michigan.

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

The Michigan Chamber Board of Directors recently 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 environmental activists.

"The dangerous petition drive to ban hydraulic fracturing is based on fear and emotion, not facts or sound science. Worse yet, it is a direct attack 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 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 of 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 energy exploration in Michigan, voters will once again reject a dangerous ballot proposal."

"Eighty percent of Michigan homes are heated with natural gas," Studley noted. "Safe natural gas produced right here in Michigan means more jobs and lower energy bills for homeowners.

"Now is not the time to sign away Michigan's energy future," Studley concluded.

The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process. For over 50 years, the Michigan Chamber has been a leader in business advocacy and remains committed to playing a constructive role in shaping our state's future. In separate, independent surveys of lawmakers, executive branch officials, lobbyists and association executives, the *MIRS* and *Inside Michigan Politics* newsletters consistently have ranked the Michigan Chamber as the most influential organization in the State Capitol.

As a statewide business organization, the Michigan Chamber represents 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.

SOURCE Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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