

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Applauds Legislature For Bi-Partisan, Unanimous Passage Of Taxpayer Protections

LANSING, Mich., Dec. 13, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today commended the Michigan House and Senate for their leadership in standing up for individuals and taxpayers who have been unfairly assessed taxes by the State of Michigan. Senate Bill 64 (Brandenburg, R-11) passed with unanimous, bi-partisan support and is now headed to Governor Snyder.

The bill addresses key reforms to Michigan's officer tax liability laws. Michigan currently has one of the most expansive laws and the most aggressive administration of the statute in the country. Most every other state, and the Internal Revenue Service, hold officers of a company personally liable for unpaid "trust taxes" (such as sales, use, payroll) as it should be. Michigan however, extends this to individuals who were not officers, or not even at the company during the time of default.

Senate Bill 64 would make Michigan like other states by limiting the law to trust taxes only in the future, but it also provides meaningful reforms, so that those who have been unfairly assessed have a fair opportunity to absolve themselves.

"There is a lot at stake for individuals and taxpayers who may be unfairly assessed; assets taken, wages and bank accounts garnished, credit ruined and liens on bank accounts and homes," said Tricia Kinley, Senior Director of Tax & Regulatory Reform for the Michigan Chamber. "This legislation speaks directly to how taxes are administered in the state Michigan.

"We need to have laws that are competitive compared to other states," continued Kinley, "but individuals and taxpayers should also feel confident that the Michigan Department of Treasury is doing the proper investigation to determine not only the right amount of tax is owed, but that the right individual or company is being held responsible."

"We commend the State House and Michigan Senate for recognizing how unfairly many Michigan residents have been treated under current law," said Jim Holcomb, Senior Vice President of Business Advocacy & General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber. "Republicans and Democrats alike acted on the desperate need for reform in this area. In particular, State Senator Jack Brandenburg (sponsor and Chair of the Senate Finance Committee) and State Representative Jeff Farrington (Chair of the House Tax Policy Committee) demonstrated dogged leadership in fighting to protect individual and taxpayer rights."

"This legislation sends a clear message that we should all expect tax administration in Michigan to be thorough and fair," concluded Kinley. "We are hopeful that Governor Snyder will agree with every legislator who supported this bill and sign this into law quickly."

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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