Michigan Chamber of Commerce Expresses Strong Opposition to Passage of Legislation to Retain State Control of Permitting for Wetlands Projects

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On Wednesday, September 16th, the Michigan Senate Natural Resources Committee passed Senate Bill 785 - legislation to needlessly retain the state's obligation for permitting wetlands projects by borrowing funds from the Clean Michigan Initiative, reports the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

In response to this action, Jim Holcomb, Vice President of Business Advocacy & Associate General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber, offered the following comments on behalf of the Michigan Chamber:

"We are extremely concerned that, on the same day legislative leaders agreed to budget targets predicated on cutting state spending, the Senate Natural Resources Committee approves legislation that would make that task more difficult to achieve. Retaining the current program would be a waste of taxpayer dollars because it is duplicative of federal efforts without adding value."

Doug Roberts, Jr., Director of Environmental & Energy Policy for the Michigan Chamber, offered these additional comments:

"The Michigan Senate demonstrated bold leadership earlier this year by passing a comprehensive package of bills (SB 13, 431, 434, 435, 436, 438, 439) to reign in the ability of state agencies to issue damaging rules and operational memorandums that discourage jobs and investment from occurring in our state.

"Enacting SB 785 will allow the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to continue to issue arbitrary decisions and be an obstacle to economic growth and job creation.

"The best plan to encourage job creation and economic competitiveness with other states is to enact Senator Roger Kahn's legislation (Senate Bill 187) - a bill to ensure that the program is turned over to the Army Corps of Engineers like 48 other states have done.

"Senator Kahn's bill is directly aimed at right-sizing our government and ensuring that Michigan becomes economically competitive in the race to attract jobs."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its 50th year as a statewide business organization, now representing more than 7,000 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. 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 only one of four state chambers of commerce in the nation accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

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