Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board Supports Great Lakes Water Quality Bond Initiative

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The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors last week voted unanimously to support the Great Lakes Water Quality bond initiative as approved by the state legislature and appearing before the voters as Proposal 2 on the statewide ballot this fall. If adopted, the proposal would authorize the state to issue $1 billion in general obligation bonds to update and repair the state's sewer infrastructure.

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"The Great Lakes and its surrounding water bodies play a crucial role in Michigan's continued economic viability," said Doug Roberts, Jr., Director of Environmental & Regulatory Affairs for the Michigan Chamber. "The $15 million tourism industry, for example, depends on water related activities, including fishing, swimming and boating. As a result, the business community has a direct interest in maintaining the overall quality of the Great Lakes watershed and the resources dependent on them."

If adopted, Proposal 2 would:

* Allow the state to appropriate up to $100 million annually to finance sewage treatment works projects, storm water projects and non-point source projects.

* Authorize 90 percent of the funds to be deposited into the State Revolving Loan Fund to provide low-interest loans to communities to upgrade failing sewer systems.

* Authorize 10 percent of the funds to be deposited into the newly created Strategic Water Quality Fund designed to address growing water quality concerns, including the upgrade or replacement of failing on-site septic systems.

"Sewage entering into the waterways is one of the greatest threats to the overall environmental and economic viability of Michigan's lakes and rivers," noted Roberts. "Proposal 2 is an important measure that needs to be supported to help protect the water quality within our great state."

The Michigan Chamber is a statewide business organization representing approximately 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.

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SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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