Michigan Chamber Announces Agenda for Economic Growth; Board of Directors Approves Legislative Priorities for 2001-2002

PRNewswire
LANSING, Mich.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors today unanimously approved the Chamber's legislative priorities for the 2001-2002 legislative session. These priorities target six categories: education quality; electric utility restructuring; environmental quality; health & human resources; land use; and tax policy.

(Photo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000320/DEM039)

Approximately 300 business people who serve on the Chamber's policy committees and many local chambers of commerce were directly involved in establishing these priorities -- a process which began immediately following the November 2000 elections.

"Member involvement in establishing the Chamber's legislative priorities is critically important," said Rex E. Schlaybaugh, Jr., Chair of the Michigan Chamber's 88-member Board of Directors. Schlaybaugh is Vice Chair of Oxford Automotive, Inc., Bloomfield Hills. "It is by design that the Michigan Chamber's Board consists of business leaders from around the state that represent businesses of every size and type."

Schlaybaugh also noted that the Chamber's legislative priorities include the top three priorities identified by local chambers of commerce at a meeting held in December. Those top three priorities are: 1) accelerating the phase- out of the SBT; 2) pre-empting local "living wage" ordinances; and 3) protecting employer-sponsored health care. To protect employer- sponsored health care plans, the Michigan Chamber will push to remove health care from the SBT base and will continue to lead the fight against mandated benefits.

The Michigan Chamber's legislative priorities are not a catalog of the Chamber's position on every important issue that might come up over the next two years. Rather, they are intended to communicate to job providers, the news media, the legislature and administration a sense of what state government's top priorities should be to encourage job creation and economic growth.

"With the economy slowing both at the national level and somewhat here in Michigan, now is not the time for the legislature or administration to become complacent or overly cautious," noted Mary Princing, First Vice Chair of the Chamber's Board and President of Princing & Ewend, Saginaw. "State government must continue to be focused on what it takes to keep Michigan's economy moving forward."

"In this era of term limits, it's especially important for job providers to have a clear legislative agenda," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Jim Barrett. "During the next few weeks, Chamber members and staff will be working hard to share our agenda for economic growth with lawmakers in both houses and on both sides of the aisle. We're optimistic about the 2001-2002 legislative session."

The voting record of State Senators and State Representatives on the Chamber's legislative priorities and other key economic issues that may emerge over the next two years will become the Michigan Chamber's 2001-2002 Job Provider's Index, the Chamber's main basis for determining campaign endorsements for incumbent candidates. "Any legislator who has a 75 percent or better voting record with the Michigan Chamber will automatically receive an earned endorsement for election in 2002," explained Bob LaBrant, Senior Vice President of Political Affairs for the Michigan Chamber. "The Michigan Chamber's 2001-2002 Job Providers Index and related campaign endorsements will be announced in June or July of 2002, after the legislature recesses for the summer." One adjustment made in response to term limits, according to LaBrant, is that key issues voted upon during the 2000 lame duck session -- and future lame duck sessions -- may be included in the Chamber's Job Providers Index.

For further information about these legislative priorities, contact the Michigan Chamber's Government Relations Department at 517-371-7782.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization which represents approximately 7,000 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan' job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

NewsCom: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000320/DEM039

PRN Photo Desk, 888-776-6555 or 201-369-3467

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

Contact: Jim Barrett, Chamber President, or Rich Studley, Senior V.P.,
Gov't Relations, 517-371-2100, both of Michigan Chamber of Commerce

Website: http://www.michamber.com/

---

https://michamber.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=19845&item=39598