2nd Annual Michigan Legislative & Business Leaders Public Policy Forum A Success, Michigan Chamber Foundation Reports

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A key to building better communities -- and making Michigan an attractive place to work and live -- is for the state to provide funding for planning commission training as well as incentives for collaboration and partnering, reports the Michigan Chamber Foundation, who participated in the 2nd Annual Michigan Legislative & Business Leaders Public Policy Forum held earlier this month in Traverse City.

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The theme of the forum, which attracted nearly 150 business people, legislators, and local and regional chamber of commerce members, was "Building Tomorrow's Economy." The keynote speaker was Robert McNulty, President of Partners for Livable Communities, Washington, D.C., who discussed how quality of life issues contribute to investment and economic development.

"This year's forum provided an excellent opportunity for business, community, and political leaders to discuss economic growth and quality-of- life issues relating to worker attraction and retention," said Jim Barrett, President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber, who noted that workforce recruitment and retention is a growing challenge for Michigan job providers.

"Several public policy recommendations were identified during this two-day meeting, and I am hopeful that these recommendations will improve public debate and, ultimately, encourage legislative discussion and action," added Barrett.

This year's public policy forum was the second in a series. In 1999, the Michigan Legislative & Business Leaders Public Policy Forum addressed land use and growth management. At that forum a set of principles were developed to guide Michigan land-use policy, which served as the basis for legislative discussion and action.

After presentations by national, state, and local experts and panel discussions on several topics, attendees of this year's forum split into five breakout sessions to discuss a number of important issues that affect communities and tomorrow's economy and make recommendations for legislative discussion and action. For a summary of the recommendations, contact the Michigan Chamber of Commerce at 517-371-2100 or visit the Chamber's web site at http://www.michamber.com/

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