Path to Revitalizing State is Paved With Spending Restraint and Reforms, Says Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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2011 is shaping up to be another difficult budget year, but with a disciplined approach to spending, state legislators and the Governor can put Michigan on the road to recovery, says the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

"Our state continues to face some economic challenges," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Rich Studley. "However, it remains clear that state government must live within its means and reject any general tax increases."

"Our membership could not be clearer that increasing taxes on employers or employees is not the answer," continued Studley. "Citizens across the state want a smaller, more efficient government and they expect elected policymakers to take the actions necessary to revitalize our economy."

"Working families and job providers make difficult decisions every day to live within their means; state government must do the same," Studley remarked.

Studley noted that 2010 should be the year of reforms. "If our state is to truly remake itself and compete for jobs, we must streamline and downsize state government, higher education, local schools and municipal government by acting on many of the long and growing list of overdue reform measures."

"The cost of state government must be brought in line with taxpayer ability to pay," said Jim Holcomb, Vice President of Business Advocacy and Associate General Counsel for the Michigan Chamber. "The biggest problem Michigan faces in the area of tax policy is that we're running out of taxpayers. Too many have left Michigan to find jobs; too many people are unemployed; and too many employers are not profitable and are struggling to survive."

"A strong and growing Michigan economy is the best guarantee we can have that there will be enough revenue to adequately fund essential government services," Holcomb continued. "It is time for elected officials to stand up and represent the millions of taxpayers who foot the bill and to stop trying to craft complicated schemes designed to reach deeper into their wallets."

"The Michigan Chamber will vigorously oppose any general tax increases," Holcomb added. "During the upcoming elections, our membership will hold elected officials accountable for their votes, should they favor bigger government at the expense of taxpayers."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce 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. It is one of only four state chambers of commerce in the nation accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

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