State House Passes Measure to Keep Jobs in Michigan; Michigan Chamber Encourages Senate, Governor to Do the Same

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The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today praised 57 members of the State House for passing remedial legislation that will help Michigan job providers remain competitive under Michigan's new minimum wage law and keep jobs in the state. The Michigan Chamber encourages the Senate and Governor to do the same.

In March, a bill was signed into law to increase Michigan's minimum wage. Because the bill raised Michigan's minimum wage higher than the federal minimum wage, many employers who had been exempt from paying overtime must now begin paying those wages effective October 1, 2006.

"Estimates show that the recently approved minimum wage increase will trigger costly new overtime requirements on about 15,000 Michigan employers and expand the eligibility for overtime to about 370,000 previously exempt employees," said Wendy Block, Director of Health Policy and Human Resources for the Michigan Chamber. "Remedial legislation needs to be passed by October 1, 2006 to maintain the status quo in respect to overtime and help Michigan job providers remain competitive with out-of-state companies.

"House Bill 6213, sponsored by State Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-Zeeland), was passed out of the Michigan House earlier today, is consistent with the original intent of the law and would remove the unintended and costly new requirements on Michigan job providers," noted Block.

"We're very disappointed that although nine members of the House Democratic Caucus co-sponsored House Bill 6213, not a single Democratic lawmaker was willing to help employees or employers by voting for this bill in committee or on the floor of the House," said Rich Studley, Executive Vice President of the Michigan Chamber. "We encourage Senators to work in a bi-partisan fashion and bring this bill to a vote early next week."

"If Governor Granholm is serious about her promise to 'go anywhere and do anything' to keep jobs in Michigan, we hope she will go to her office and sign this bill when it reaches her desk," Block concluded.

The Michigan Chamber is a statewide business organization which represents more than 6,900 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.

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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