Michigan Chamber of Commerce Joins the Fight to Protect Jobs in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

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A petition drive aimed at banning most types of mining in Michigan, especially in the Upper Peninsula, would have a negative impact on job creation and business growth across the state, says the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. The Michigan Chamber's Board of Directors yesterday voted unanimously to join the fight to protect jobs in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and across the state by opposing this dangerous effort to politicize the regulatory process by banning mining.

"Michigan's mining industry has long played an important role in our state's economy, especially in the Upper Peninsula," said Rich Studley, President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber. "Getting Michigan moving forward again means we must be a state that grows things and makes things. Making things in Michigan means mining and manufacturing, which go hand-in-hand."

"With the unanimous support from our Board of Directors, the Michigan Chamber will join Citizens to Protect Michigan Jobs and fight to defeat this irresponsible proposal," Studley added.

A proposed new nickel mine outside of Ishpeming is the target of a ballot initiative by Detroit-area environmental activists.

"What this ballot initiative seeks to do is amend the state's mining law to prohibit mining within 2,000 feet of a water body," explained Doug Roberts, Jr., Director of Environmental & Energy Policy for the Michigan Chamber. "Almost everywhere in Michigan is within 2,000 feet of a water body, so this would essentially ban all new mining in Michigan."

"In addition to investing in Michigan to create good jobs and produce a product that is essential to many types of manufacturing, the company that would operate the new mine (Kennecott) has done all of the right things to comply with the toughest mining law in the country," noted Roberts. "It is unfair and disingenuous that environmental groups that supported Michigan's mining law are now trying to change the rules of the game after the permit has been approved."

"Michigan's employers need a consistent regulatory environment to make multi-million dollar investments over multi-year periods," said Roberts. "At a time when our state has the highest unemployment rate in the country, this anti-jobs petition drive sends a terrible message that Michigan is closed for business."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is among a growing list of organizations opposed to the statutory initiative, including: all members of the State Legislature from the Upper Peninsula; local chambers of commerce executives and business leaders in the U.P., such as the Lake Superior Community Partnership; and local governmental officials in the U.P., including the U.P. Association of County Commissions.

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's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

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