

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Raises Concerns With Flawed Federal Health Care Reform Proposal, Rushed Timeline

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today expressed serious concern with Congress' rushed timeline to address health care reform and urged Michigan's Congressional Delegation to demand that legislative leaders reconsider their approach and priorities.

"Like the U.S. Chamber, the Michigan Chamber stands ready to work with Congress and the President to reform the health care system for individuals and job providers alike," said Wendy Block, Director of Health Policy and Human Resources, for the Michigan Chamber. "However, if Congress does not do a better job reducing costs, increasing quality and making coverage affordable, this legislation is doomed to failure."

"Unfortunately, Congress seems set on advancing several dangerous provisions, including a government-run insurance plan to drive competition out of the marketplace and take away options for the over 5.7 million, or 58 percent, of Michigan citizens who have employment-based coverage," said Block. "Just as troubling is the proposed employer mandate and other major tax increases on small business owners, high income earners and others, which would be devastating to Michigan job providers who are struggling to survive the economic downturn."

"We have serious concerns about the process being used to advance this legislation," said Richard K. Studley, President and CEO of the Michigan Chamber. "If there is one thing the Michigan Chamber has learned from 50 years of legislative experience, it's that good public policy can stand the test of time and some sunshine."

"We strongly urge each and every member of Michigan's Congressional Delegation to demand that this proposal not be brought to a vote until they have read the final version in its entirety and it is available to all Michigan residents for review and comment," Studley continued.

"The business community stands ready to work with Congress to pass health care reform legislation, but the current proposal must be reworked with an eye on how it will not only impact competition, cost and quality, but also jobs and job providers," Studley concluded.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its 50th year as a statewide business organization, now 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.

First Call Analyst:

FCMN Contact:

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

CONTACT: Wendy Block, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, +1-517-371-7678

Web Site: <http://www.michamber.com/>

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