

Twice This Week Governor Ignores Michigan Law and Turns Back on Job Providers, Says Michigan Chamber of Commerce

Twice this week Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm chose to ignore Michigan law and unjustly penalize Michigan job providers, reports the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. Today, the Governor announced her plans to prohibit Ice Mountain Spring Water Company from shipping its product -- bottled water -- outside of the Great Lakes basin.

"This precedent causes great concern for job providers dependent on replenishable water resources and jeopardizes jobs and business investment in Michigan," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Jim Barrett. "Thousands of businesses use water in the processing of products and in the provision of services, including automobiles, paper, pharmaceuticals, agricultural commodities, golf and ski resorts and electric generation, to name a few. If this type of standard is applied to other businesses, it could result in significant losses of jobs and future business investment in Michigan."

"The conditions placed on Ice Mountain are unfair, discriminatory and very likely violate the Interstate Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution," Barrett added. "The Michigan Chamber will consider legal options available to remedy this situation in order to protect job providers throughout Michigan."

Earlier this week, the Governor announced her plans to implement key portions of her proposed "Water Legacy Act" through the rules process -- leaving job providers and residents with little or no opportunity for input.

"The Governor's proposed 'Water Legacy Act' would impose a complicated and unnecessary regulatory scheme on over 4,000 public and private water users," said Doug Roberts, Jr., Director of Environmental & Regulatory Affairs for the Michigan Chamber. "According to our own analysis, the cost for Michigan job providers would exceed \$100 million and would likely discourage investment and job creation in Michigan."

In addition, Roberts noted that the Governor's proposed "Water Legacy Act" is not supported by sound science, making the claims of environmental benefits unclear. "Any water protection management system should be based on risk to the resource as opposed to arbitrary standards," he said. In August, a state groundwater map (PA 148 of 2003) will be completed which will allow lawmakers to develop an appropriate scientific-based groundwater protection statute.

"State lawmakers have repeatedly rejected the Governor's proposed 'Water Legacy Act.' Now the Governor is trying to end run the legislative process and Michigan law by implementing her plan through the rulemaking process," Roberts said.

"The Governor's actions in restricting the sale of products outside the Great Lakes basin and imposing excessive groundwater restrictions are examples of regulatory and executive authority run amok. If the Governor's actions are upheld, it will impact Michigan's economy in a negative manner," Barrett concluded.

The Michigan Chamber is a statewide business organization which represents more than 6,500 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.

The complete analysis of the Governor's proposed "Water Legacy Act" is available on the Michigan Chamber's website at <http://www.michamber.com/>.

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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