

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Opposes House Bill On Unemployment Benefits Increase

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today announced its opposition to House Bill 5763, introduced by State Representative Randy Richardville (R-Monroe), to increase the maximum weekly unemployment benefit from \$300 to \$415 for all eligible claimants. According to information released by House Republicans, the proposed \$415 per week unemployment benefit is almost twice the national average and \$15 per week more than what the AFL-CIO proposed.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000320/DEM039>)

"The unemployment benefit increase contained in HB 5763 is excessive and unaffordable," said Rich Studley, Senior Vice President of Government Relations for the Michigan Chamber. "This blanket benefit increase would rapidly deplete Michigan's unemployment insurance trust fund and result in increased payroll taxes on job providers."

"Representative Richardville's plan to pay people \$10.37 an hour for not working is irresponsible," added Studley. "The Richardville bill would discourage job creation and hinder economic growth by making Michigan's unemployment insurance system less competitive with other states. We strongly urge the State House to reject the Richardville bill."

The Michigan Chamber supports a reasonable benefit increase for unemployed workers coupled with a plan to increase benefits for each additional dependent up to \$415 and implement meaningful cost-saving reform measures. "This is a far more responsible approach," said Tricia Kinley, Director of Tax Policy & Economic Development for the Michigan Chamber. "Expecting job-providers, who already pay 100% of the benefits, to foot the bill for such a costly proposal that would discourage people from seeking work, such as the Richardville plan, is unfair and unacceptable."

The Michigan Chamber 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.

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