

Michigan Chamber of Commerce Praises Legislature for Passage of Cost-Saving Unemployment Insurance Legislation

Lansing, MI

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today issued the following statements in response to the passage of unemployment insurance legislation (House Bill 4408) by the State House and Michigan Senate.

Statement from Wendy Block, Director of Health Policy & Human Resources:

"Today, the House and Senate passed unemployment insurance legislation (HB 4408) that is a win-win for job providers hoping to create jobs and individuals struggling to find work. We thank Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville (R-Monroe), House Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) and Governor Snyder for their support of this important legislation."

"This legislation achieves the important goal of allowing displaced workers to continue receiving up to 99 weeks of benefits through the end of 2011 and requiring the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) to more aggressively pursue fraud and abuse in the UI system."

"The Michigan Chamber strongly supported this compromise legislation. Without reforms like those found in HB 4408, Michigan job providers' total additional tax burden would automatically increase by as much as \$240 million in 2011 and increase progressively over the next decade to repay the nearly \$4 billion Michigan's UI system owes to the federal government debt plus interest."

Statement from Jim Holcomb, Senior Vice President, Business Advocacy & Associate General Counsel:

"This legislation represents real cost-saving reforms which will allow job providers, who finance 100 percent of the costs of the UI program, to redirect their financial resources to rehire those currently receiving assistance. Passage of HB 4408 clearly demonstrates that Senate Majority Leader Richardville, House Speaker Bolger and their colleagues are willing to take the bold action necessary to make Michigan more competitive and, ultimately, create more jobs statewide."

"We look forward to the Governor signing this legislation and to seeing the positive effect this legislation will have on job providers and displaced workers alike."

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization representing approximately 6,800 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber represents businesses of every size and type in all 83 counties of the state. The Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process. It is one of only four state chambers of commerce in the nation accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The Michigan Chamber Political Action Committee (PAC) is one of the most effective political action programs in the nation. Ranked 19th among Michigan's top 150 PACs, the Michigan Chamber PAC is a leader and the voice of business. It is also one of the largest state chamber PACs in the country. In the November 2010 General Election, the Michigan Chamber endorsed 112 candidates; 94 percent won on Election Day.

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