

MIRS Capitol Capsule, Tuesday, May 30, 2017

MI Chamber, Berryman Retake Top Association Honors

In any state's capitol city, the associations are often numerous and its missions diverse. It makes the question of "most effective" association an intriguing part of the *MIRS/EPIC-MRA* biennial insider survey.

In the category of "most effective membership organization" the Michigan Chamber of Commerce again took top honors, a distinction they've had firm hold of since the first survey was conducted back in 2005.

"Legislative effectiveness starts with a compelling mission, great volunteer leaders that act with vision and courage and a knowledgeable and experienced lobby team that works tirelessly to promote conditions favorable to job creation and business success in Michigan," said Rich **STUDLEY**, president and CEO of the Michigan Chamber when reached for comment.

In the balloting, the Chamber this year took 24 percent of the top votes, followed by the Michigan Health and Hospital Association (MHA) at 9 percent. Coming in third was the Auto Dealers of Michigan with 5 percent.

Tied for fourth place were the Beer and Wine Wholesalers, the Michigan Municipal League and the Small Business Association of Michigan. The Michigan Association of Health Plans netted three percent of the top votes.

While the Chamber is the most effective on an organizational basis, long-time Lansing lobbyist for the Auto Dealers Kurt **BERRYMAN** won the honor of most effective lobbyist for an association as well as most effective "single-issue" lobbyist, carrying the day in two categories.

Asked for comment, Berryman responded: "Dr. Seuss is right. You do have to be odd to be Number 1."

Berryman received 9 percent of the votes. In second place was a three-way tie among Chris **MITCHELL** and Dillon **McGOUGH**, of the MHA, and the Michigan Chamber's Rich **STUDLEY**, who each netted out 4 percent.

Three individuals tied for third place in the most effective lobbyist question -- Wendy **BLOCK** of the Chamber, Tony **STAMAS** of the Small Business Association of Michigan and Peter **SPADAFORE** of Michigan Association of School Administrators.

The following eight association lobbyists were tied for fourth with two percent each:

- Andy **JOHNSTON**, vice president of government affairs, Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
- Chris **HACKBARTH**, director of State and Federal Affairs for the Michigan Municipal League
- Delany **McKINLEY**, senior director of Government Affairs and Members for the Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA)
- Dominic **PALLONE**, executive director of the Michigan Association of Health Plans
- Jim **HOLCOMB**, senior vice president and general counsel for the Michigan Chamber
- Judy **ALLEN**, director of legislative affairs for the Michigan Townships Association
- Robert **O'MEARA**, vice president of government affairs for the Michigan Restaurant Association
- Tricia **KINLEY**, former director of tax policy for the Chamber now with Gov. Rick [SNYDER](#)'s staff

On the question of most effective "single-issue lobbying organization," Berryman garnered 11 percent followed by Right to Life of Michigan's Ed **RIVET** with 6 percent.

Tied for third in this category, each with two percent, were:

- Cathy **WILSON**, director of State Government Affairs for Detroit Edison
- Chris **MITCHELL**, MHA
- Dillon **McGOUGH**, MHA
- Jim **MURRAY**, president of AT&T of Michigan
- Kristen **KRAFT**, Director of Government Affairs for Blue Cross and Blue Shield
- Mark **COOK**, vice president of Government Affairs for Blue Cross and Blue Shield
- Matt **GROEN**, executive director of the Michigan Cable Telecommunications Association
- Spencer **NEVIN**, president of the Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers

The 2017 *MIRS* EPIC/MRA Capitol Insider Survey included completed responses from 479 legislators, lobbyists, staff members and other insiders in and around the state capital. It was conducted online from May 12, through May 19, 2017 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.7 percent.