

2013–2014 KEY SENATE VOTES BILL DESCRIPTIONS

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

SB 661 – Free Speech for Job Providers

Protects the Free Speech and Freedom of Association for all job providers by ensuring that members of organizations, like the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, have the ability to educate the public and speak with one voice on important issues. This legislation was a direct response to an administrative rule proposed by the Secretary of State that would have stifled the free speech of job providers. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 252 of 2013.

Roll Call Number 618

ENVIRONMENT

SB 163 – Michigan's Wetlands Law

Updates Michigan's Wetlands law to bring it into compliance with the Clean Water Act. This legislation will permit Michigan to retain state delegated authority from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to run this program at the state level. Maintaining a state program reduces the cost to businesses and residents, and eliminates unnecessary requirements and streamlines the program. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 98 of 2013.

Roll Call Vote 261

SB 891—Streamline Contaminated Site Cleanups

Speeds up and reduces the cost of the cleanup process without sacrificing any health or safety standards. The bill defines what constitutes residential and non-residential property and ensures that site-specific criteria can be accepted. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill passed the Senate, but the House has not acted.

Roll Call Vote 513

HB 5400 – Encourage Industrial Recycling

Allows for the reuse of certain industrial byproducts. This law defines what products may be reused, how they may be reused and what requirements are necessary for their reuse. This law brings Michigan more in line with the way other states handle these products and will allow industry to better reuse and recycle their byproducts. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 178 of 2014.

Roll Call Vote 382

HUMAN RESOURCES

SB 95 – Repeal of Right-to-Work Law

Blocked a vote to repeal Michigan's Right-to-Work law, which protects all employees from being forced to join a union and pay dues against their will. The Chamber supported blocking the vote. The vote was blocked.

Roll Call Number 53

SB 173 – Employers' Leave Policies

Prohibits local jurisdictions from enacting mandatory paid or unpaid leave laws which micromanage the human resources policies of private sector employers. The Chamber supported passage. The bill passed the Senate, but the House has not acted.

Roll Call Number 232

HB 4952 – Unemployment Insurance

Reforms the employer-financed Unemployment Insurance system to provide that an individual is disqualified from benefits if the individual tests positive for a pre-employment drug test or refuses to take the test. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 146 of 2013.

Roll Call Number 428

HB 5487 – Workers' Compensation

Addresses an unprecedented liability facing the workers' compensation system that, if left unaddressed, could threaten the sustainability of Michigan's self-insurance system. The Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 236 of 2014.

Roll Call Number 488

SB 934 – Minimum Wage Increase

Put Michigan's minimum wage rate on autopilot for the first time in state history via annual inflationary increases. The Chamber opposed passage. The bill was passed in the Senate but the House lessened the negative impact by limiting the annual impact of this provision. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 138 of 2014.

Roll Call Number 316

LEGAL REFORM

SB 443 – Limit Judgment Levies

Limits the ability of judges to levy property taxes to pay unpaid bills that school districts owe to their vendors. The legislation creates a robust notification process that will immediately give the legislature, state treasury and locals the information they need to intervene before a judgment is levied. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 185 of 2013.

Roll Call Number 477

HB 5558 – Lawsuit Abuse

Clarifies that lawsuits cannot be filed against insurance companies under the state Consumer Protection Act because they are already subject to lawsuits under the state's Insurance Code. The Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 251 of 2014.

Roll Call Number 518

TAX POLICY

SB 337 – Taxpayer Protections

Reforms Michigan's officer tax liability statutes in order to stop unwarranted tax assessments on employees or officers who were either not at a company during the time of tax default or had no responsibility for tax filings. Also implements concrete deadlines for tax audits and tax refund approvals. The Michigan Chamber supported passage.

The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 3 of 2014.

Roll Call Number 2

SB 489 – Personal Property Tax Reform

Provides small businesses with less than \$80,000 in equipment per tax jurisdiction with full tax relief. This bill is part of a package to begin phase-out of the business personal property tax. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 153 of 2013.

Roll Call Number 364

HB 4291 – Audit Procedures

Requires Michigan Treasury to improve audit procedures. Codifies that Michigan Treasury must provide taxpayers with their audit work papers and requires Treasury to promulgate rules regarding acceptable standards for performing audits. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed and enacted into law as Public Act 35 of 2014.

Roll Call Number 51

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT

HB 5477 – Modernize Gas Tax

Modernizes the current fixed gas tax rate of 19 cents per gallon to a percent per-gallon rate. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed by the House but was defeated by the Senate.

Roll Call Number 524

HB 5493 – Diesel Tax Parity

Modernizes the diesel tax rate to be consistent with the rates established in House Bill 5477. Under the Act, a licensed motor carrier must pay a road tax based on the amount of motor fuel consumed in qualified vehicles on roads within the State. This legislation would ensure truckers not purchasing fuel in Michigan would still remit tax in an amount equal to those buying fuel in state. The Michigan Chamber supported passage. The bill was passed by the House and Senate in substitute form and is awaiting final concurrence by the House.

Roll Call Number 447