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Holistic approach will ensure Michigan can compete, isn't left behind other states luring good jobs, investment

Brownfield package introduced today is important first step; other legislation needed to ensure Michigan has critical job attraction tool

Detroit, Mich. – Today's MI Thrive brownfield legislative package, sponsored by State Senator Ken Horn, is a crucial component to step up the state's economic development efforts. It's also just one half of a broader strategy to ensure Michigan can compete in the race for large-scale projects that can create hundreds of good-paying jobs in every community, said several state business and labor leaders and economic developers.

"Michigan cities across the state will benefit from this needed economic development tool. It's an essential next step to help spur increased private investment and redevelop urban centers in both Peninsulas," said **Doug Rothwell, president & CEO for Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM)**.

At the same time, Rothwell noted that "it's clear we also need another tool to grow and attract good paying jobs: a simple, transparent and predictable mechanism available to all industries that doesn't pick winners and losers. Other states, including our Great Lakes neighbors Indiana and Ohio, are outcompeting and outspending us up to 7 to 1. Every community in every corner of the state stands to benefit from enacting a targeted, strategic tool like this."

"We've seen and heard loud and clear the headlines from across the country and the overwhelming feedback from our local economic developers and national site selectors: Michigan must have another tool to compete effectively for new jobs. We can't sit on the sidelines anymore, especially as the national climate heats up with more companies looking to bring jobs back to the United States," said **State Senator Jim Stamas**. "That's exactly why I will reintroduce legislation soon to do just that – grow good jobs for Michigan, grow wages for Michigan families, and grow our economies everywhere in the state, from Midland to Marquette and Montmorency County to Monroe."

For **Whirlpool Corporate Vice President D. Jeffrey Noel**, this race for jobs is real. Over the last 100+ years, his Michigan-based company has grown from humble beginnings to become the world's largest and most innovative home appliance company, with its company headquarters still operating out of Benton Harbor Township.

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“Whirlpool is proud to be headquartered right here in Michigan with over 4,000 employees,” said Noel. “We want to stay in Michigan and for us to do that, the state needs to grow and Southwest Michigan needs to add new employers. To attract and grow good paying jobs, Michigan needs to be more competitive. From our experience of doing business in virtually every state, it’s clear that we simply do not have a winning set of tools to attract the kinds of growth and jobs we need as a committed Michigan employer.”

“Countless headlines in other states should serve as warning to us in Michigan that we’ve got to do more – and quickly – to stay competitive. Every day, neighboring states and countries are working on new programs, incentives and strategies to beat Michigan to the newest jobs and the top talent,” said **Bob Trezise, president & CEO of the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP)**. “More than ever, states will be fighting intensely over these projects. 45 other states have strong tools – and Michigan, along with Alaska, are the *only* two states that have a corporate income tax and do not offer any job, research and development or investment tax credits. Smart public policy decisions are necessary to make sure Michigan doesn’t fall behind other states in the race for more and better jobs. We can’t attract jobs without stronger communities and without more good jobs, our communities will lag behind.”

Patrick Devlin, the secretary-treasurer of the Michigan Building & Construction Trades Council, said “it’s past time to put Michigan in position to attract these new businesses and grow jobs and opportunities for our state’s worker and families. The future of our state and its ability to prosper for current and future generations is riding on it.”

Each leader urged passage of the MI Thrive legislation and indicated they also look forward to Sen. Stamas’ introduction sometime soon of a simple, transparent, jobs attraction tool that would only be awarded if jobs are created.

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About Business Leaders for Michigan:

Business Leaders for Michigan, the state’s business roundtable, is dedicated to making Michigan a “Top Ten” state for jobs, personal incomes and a healthy economy. The organization is composed exclusively of the chairpersons, chief executive officers, or most senior executives of Michigan’s largest companies and universities. Our members drive 32% of the state’s economy, provide nearly 375,000 direct jobs in Michigan, generate over \$1 Trillion in annual revenue and serve nearly one half of all Michigan public university students. Find out more at: www.businessleadersformichigan.com