



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Andy Johnston

Vice President of Government Affairs

616.822.1878

johnstona@grandrapids.org

Chamber Takes Stand on Two Ballot Proposals

Proposals on Marijuana and Redistricting a Step Back for Michigan

Grand Rapids – At its March meeting, the Grand Rapids Chamber Board of Directors moved to oppose two proposals seeking to be on the November ballot - the statutory initiative to legalize the adult recreational use of marijuana and the constitutional amendment on redistricting.

"After hearing from both sides on these proposals, it is clear to our members and the Board that both ballot proposals would be a step back for Michigan," said Rick Baker, President and CEO of the Grand Rapids Chamber. "As a state and region, we need to remain focused on the priorities that are critical to West Michigan's growth such as addressing the talent gap, sound fiscal policy and quality infrastructure. These proposals take us in the wrong direction."

On the statutory proposal to legalize marijuana:

"The Chamber is concerned over the negative impacts this proposal would have on the economy, talent, public health, and the fact that marijuana is still illegal under federal law," said Andy Johnston, Vice President of Government Affairs. "This proposal would create a host of new workplace issues for employers. At a time when job providers are struggling to find qualified applicants and talent is the top business issue, we have significant concerns on how passage of this proposal would impact the workforce."

On the constitutional amendment on redistricting:

"The Chamber sets a high bar for supporting any proposal to amend Michigan's Constitution and the redistricting amendment fails to meet this test," said Johnston. "This proposal is flawed and unworthy of being enshrined in the State Constitution."

"Our concerns centered on how the proposed commission would operate, the altered and vague requirements on how districts are created and restrictions on necessary judicial safeguards for legislative maps," continued Johnston.

Petition signatures for both proposals are under review by the Michigan Secretary of State. Should these proposals make the ballot, the Chamber will work to educate members on the impacts these proposals would have on our state and region.

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