

2021 GUIDE



MICHIGAN
WEST COAST
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WELCOME



THE WEST COAST CHAMBER acts as the voice of the business community, which means we work to ensure your concerns reach the ears of people who need to hear them. By providing opportunities to have discussions with elected officials at **Capitol Connections programs**, Public Policy: **Issues That Matter** meetings, **In the Know programs**, Special Legislative Events and Executive Roundtables, the Chamber is a Convener of

leaders and influencers. By offering educational resources to keep members current on issues that impact business, the Chamber serves as a Catalyst for business growth. By bringing critical community issues to the forefront for discussion, the Chamber serves as a Champion for our thriving community.

As a Chamber member you have numerous opportunities to connect with decision makers and valuable information via our Advocacy in Action programs, which take a holistic approach to supporting your businesses and the greater good of our community. It's a valuable benefit, and I encourage you to take advantage of the Chamber Advocacy resources available to you.

Best Regards,

Jane Clark

Jane Clark, *President*



**MICHIGAN
WEST COAST**

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Holland, MI 49423

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ADVOCACY IN ACTION



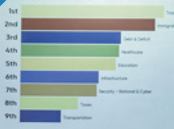
ADVOCACY IN ACTION is not about “politics.” It’s about getting our members’ business concerns and feedback to the people who’ve been elected to represent us in our community, in Lansing and in Washington DC. It’s also about making sure our community and its businesses have opportunities to thrive, grow, and remain competitive across the state and around the globe.

The West Coast Chamber serves as the advocate at the local, state, and federal levels for our 1,200 member businesses and 64,000 member employees. Our commitment is to educate our members on issues which impact our members and community, and to serve as an advocate for a business-friendly environment.

Our Public Policy Agenda was created to inform our members, our elected officials, and our community on the position of the West Coast Chamber on issues that impact business. To learn more about our Public Policy efforts, visit our website at www.westcoastchamber.org.

The Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce is your business advocate. We do this by:

- Monitoring legislation at the local, state, and federal level that has a potential effect on the business community
- Actively communicating with local, state, and federal officials on business related issues
- Convening meetings and events that connect our members with elected officials
- Informing our members on public policy issues that impact their business
- Joining forces with the Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Grand Haven Chambers of Commerce through the West Michigan Chamber Coalition on issues with regional and statewide importance and the Great Lakes Metro Chamber Coalition on federal issues



2020-21 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE

Modern, up-to date infrastructure must be maintained for our community and state to effectively compete in the global marketplace.

- Encourage the deployment of internet technologies that are ubiquitous and affordable to support the development, attraction, and growth of technology-based businesses and jobs
- Advocate for the development of energy policies that ensure reliable and economical energy supplies while maintaining environmental responsibility
- Support Lake Macatawa and Lake Michigan infrastructure needs including dredging and port projects
- Endorse efforts to ensure a clean and viable water system
- Support the West Michigan Regional Airport and the Gerald R. Ford International Airport
- Maintain and grow the commitment to fix Michigan's roads and bridges
- Support the development and funding of a long-term strategy that includes asset management to modernize and maintain Michigan's critical economic development infrastructure

A TALENTED MICHIGAN

To compete in the 21st Century economy and to continue to grow as a state, Michigan must attract, grow and retain a highly-skilled workforce.

- Continue investment in early childhood development through programs such as Ready for School, which results in improved student outcomes, enhanced academic achievement, and decreased social service costs
- Support rigorous K-12 reforms standards that prepare students for success in the 21st century economy
- Support effective workforce training programs like the Skilled Trades Training Fund
- Enhance career counseling with the focus of helping students and adults explore career options, whether that pathway is early/middle college, apprenticeship, community college or four-year universities, and provide guidance on setting a path to a career
- Support market-based approaches for affordable housing including efforts of Housing Next in our community
- Support efforts of Public Transportation in our community
- Support reasonable criminal justice reform that would reduce barriers of employment



TACKLING UNFUNDED LIABILITIES

Michigan is making headway to address legacy costs. Retiree benefits must be addressed to resolve the problems hamstringing too many local units of government.

- Encourage transparency of the real obligations facing units of government, using realistic assumptions
- Support appropriate funding plans and/or move to a defined contribution for retiree income
- Support appropriate funding plans and/or move to a defined contribution for retiree healthcare

PROMOTE GOOD GOVERNANCE

We must work to institutionalize a culture of good governance in Michigan.

- Promote the civility in political discourse
- Encourage responsible, timely, long-term budgeting at the state and local level
- Encourage regular review of programs to determine they are efficient and effective
- Support consistent and smart regulatory environment that avoids duplicative and costly regulation
- Support efforts that encourage the sharing of services and cooperation between local governments

ENVIRONMENT

The Chamber must work to ensure that environmental regulations encourage and support a growing economy while balancing and protecting our quality of life.

- Encourage control of invasive species
- Support efforts to continue to achieve our region's air quality attainment status
- Support Project Clarity and efforts to improve Lake Macatawa Water Quality

HEALTHCARE

The rising cost of health care directly impacts business. The Chamber will provide information and tools to help member businesses control health care costs.

- Endorse efforts to control the rising cost of health care through expanding flexibility, transparency, competition, and choice in the health insurance marketplace
- Support Medicaid reform as long as it does not adversely affect health care costs.



ADVOCACY IN ACTION PROGRAMS

“ADVOCACY IN ACTION” is an umbrella for the West Coast Chamber advocacy programs. You’ll find Chamber staff, Board members and Ambassadors out in the community every day, actively listening to your concerns and ideas. This is how we stay on top of what is most important to the businesses in West Michigan.

Each month we host a **Capitol Connections program** that features updates from local government representatives as well as a panel discussion with our elected State legislators. It provides our members the opportunity to ask questions and make meaningful connections with policy makers. When available, our Federal representatives join us for this breakfast as well.

Our **Public Policy: Issues that Matter discussion convenes** monthly and is open to all members. This is a forum to provide information about important community and state issues that impact business and invite discussion from our members. This committee also makes recommendations to the Board of Directors on local policy issues.

In the Know programs connect you with leaders in education, city and county officials, public health experts, and other leaders with important information for our community.

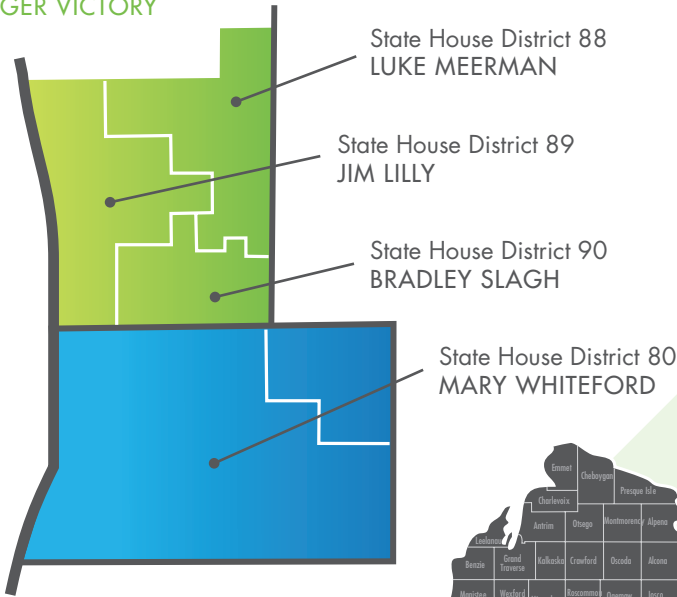
To learn more about federal policies that impact us locally, we host annual events featuring updates from our Federal elected officials. Special Legislative Events such as these, as well as our monthly events are the venues where our members have the opportunity to be involved in conversations that matter to their businesses.

ELECTED OFFICIALS



LOCAL DISTRICTS

State Senate District 30
ROGER VICTORY



State Senate District 26
ARIC NESBITT



GRETCHEN WHITMER GOVERNOR



Governor Gretchen Whitmer was elected Governor for the State of Michigan in 2018. She served as the Ingham County prosecutor in 2016, as the Senator for District 23 from 2006 to 2013, and as a Representative in the House from 2001 to 2006.

Whitmer earned her both her bachelor's degree and her J.D. from Michigan State University. Her professional experience includes working as a prosecutor for Ingham County and a corporate litigator for the law firm of Dickinson Wright. During her time in the House, Whitmer served as a Policy Analyst.

Contact:

P.O. Box 30013 • Lansing, Michigan 48909
517-373-3400 • 517-335-7858 (Constituent Services)

GARY PETERS U.S. SENATE



Senator Gary Peters represents the State of Michigan and has done so since his election in 2014. He serves on the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the Joint Economic Committee.

Contact / Washington, DC:

724 Hart Senate Office Building • Washington, DC 20510
202-224-6221 • www.peters.senate.gov

DEBBIE STABENOW U.S. SENATE



After twelve years in the Michigan House of Representatives and four years in the State Senate, Debbie Stabenow was elected to the U.S. Congress in 2000. She became the first woman from the State of Michigan elected to the United States Senate, where she also currently serves as the Chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Center. She is a member of the Senate Energy, Finance, and Budget Committees as well as Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Contact / Washington DC:

731 Hart Senate Office Building • Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4822 • www.stabenow.senate.gov

BILL HUIZENGA U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 2



Republican Congressman Bill Huizenga represents Michigan's 2nd Congressional District, which stretches from Kentwood to the lakeshore and up the coast of Lake Michigan from Holland to Ludington. He serves as Co-Chair of the Great Lakes Task Force, is a member of the House Financial Services Committee, and chairs the Capital Markets, Securities, and Investment Subcommittee for the 115th Congress.

Contact / Washington, DC:
2232 Rayburn House Office Building • Washington, DC 20515
202-225-4401

FRED UPTON U.S. HOUSE, DISTRICT 6



Congressman Republican Fred Upton is the U.S. Representative for Southwest Michigan's Sixth Congressional District and has served in this position since being elected in 1986. Currently he serves as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy, and is an active member of the Great Lakes Task Force.

Contact / Washington, DC:
2183 Rayburn House Office Building • Washington, DC 20515
202-225-3761



ARIC NESBITT STATE SENATE, DISTRICT 26



Senator Aric Nesbitt represents Michigan's 26th Senate District, which includes the people of Allegan and Van Buren Counties, along with Gaines Township and the city of Kentwood in Kent County. He currently serves as Senate President Pro Tempore and chairs the Senate Committee on Regulatory Reform, and is on the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Appropriations subcommittee.

Contact:
517-373-0793 • senanesbitt@senate.michigan.gov

ROGER VICTORY STATE SENATE, DISTRICT 30



Senator Roger Victory represents Michigan's 30th Senate District, serving Ottawa County. He chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Rural Development. Prior to joining the Senate, Victory served six years in the Michigan House of Representatives, representing the 88th District.

Contact:
517-373-6920 • SenRVictory@senate.michigan.gov

MARY WHITEFORD STATE HOUSE, DISTRICT 80



Mary Whiteford serves the 80th District in the Michigan House of Representatives, which includes the cities of Allegan, Fennville, part of Holland, Otsego, Plainwell, Saugatuck, and part of South Haven. She serves as chair of the Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, and as a member of the Health Policy Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Joint Capitol Outlay.

Contact:
517-373-0836 • MaryWhiteford@house.mi.gov

LUKE MEERMAN STATE HOUSE, DISTRICT 88



Luke Meerman serves as the Representative for the 88th District representing the residents of Allendale, Georgetown, Tallmadge, Wright, Chester, Coopersville and Polkton townships in Ottawa County. He serves as vice chair of the House Agriculture Committee, and on the Local Government Committee, Families Children and Seniors Committee, and the Commerce and Tourism Committee.

Contact:
517-373-1830 • LukeMeerman@house.mi.gov

JIM LILLY STATE HOUSE, DISTRICT 89



Jim Lilly was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in November 2016, and represents the 89th District, which includes the townships of Grand Haven, Olive, Park, Port Sheldon, Robinson, Blendon, Crockery and Spring Lake, and the cities of Ferrysburg and Grand Haven. Lilly serves as vice chair of the newly created House Ways and Means Committee, and as a member the Government Operations Committee.

Contact:
517-373-0838 • JimLilly@house.mi.gov

BRADLEY SLAGH STATE HOUSE, DISTRICT 90



Bradley Slagh represents the 90th District, which encompasses parts of Ottawa County, including the cities of Holland, Hudsonville and Zeeland, and the townships of Holland, Jamestown and Zeeland. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, he serves as vice chair of the appropriations subcommittees on Corrections, and Joint Capital Outlay, and is a member of the subcommittees on Higher Education and Community Colleges, and Natural Resources and Environmental Quality.

Contact:
517-373-0830 • BradleySlagh@house.mi.gov

Your health insurance plan ***is increasing by 10%... again.***

What do you do?

- a. Cut profits
- b. Reduce benefits
- c. Pass the cost to employees
- d. None of the above**

Take Control of Your Healthcare Supply Chain

Every year, the rising cost of health insurance forces businesses to choose between reducing benefits or passing the cost burden to your employees. What if you had a way to take control of your second biggest expense (second to payroll) to reduce cost and improve the benefits you offer to employees?