

March 1, 2005

Mr. Steve Chester, Director
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Constitution Hall
200 West Allegan St.
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Director Chester:

We, the undersigned members of the water policy workgroup, are very concerned about the recent characterization of our participation in the workgroup. As Michigan job providers we attended the workgroup meetings to discuss broad water policy, not to discuss specific legislation. We have made this position clear from the time the workgroup was formed last year.

Recent testimony by the Department before the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee indicated that the workgroup has "substantial and even remarkable consensus" on many issues. Unfortunately, this testimony has led to confusion and has further politicized the issue. This is making water policy discussions, at this time, both difficult and frustrating.

As a part of the work group process, the regulated community jointly submitted a white paper indicating our view that, regulating before establishing an environmental and economic basis is premature. This will result in inappropriate regulation that neither protects the environment nor encourages economic growth. Water policy developed in the absence of science, and before the Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council provides their report, is inappropriate.

Suggesting broad consensus exists in the workgroup is both premature and misrepresents the nature of the discussion. It certainly ignores the regulated community's clearly stated position.

We respectfully request that the activities of the water policy group be suspended until the report of the Advisory Council is available, and we have more meaningful science-based information. We ask this to end the confusion, remove the politics from the issue and allow for unencumbered debate and discussion in the Legislature. We expect the meeting for March 7, 2005 will be canceled.

Thank you for including us in your discussions and we look forward to working with you in the future to protect our water resources in Michigan.

Respectfully,

Doug Roberts, Jr. - Michigan Chamber of Commerce
Mike Johnston - Michigan Manufactures Association
Andy Such - Michigan Chemistry Council
Rob Anderson – Michigan Farm Bureau
Clayton Galarneau – Michigan Milk Producers Association
Ben Kudwa – Potato Growers of Michigan
Ed Noyola – County Road Association of Michigan
Keith Carey – National Federation of Independent Business
Eric Rule – Michigan Retailers Association
Melissa Roy – Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce
Jared Rodriguez – Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
Kevin Korpi – Michigan Forest Products Council
Bill Lobenherz – Michigan Soft Drink Association
Mike Frederick – Michigan Concrete Paving Association
Mike Newman – Michigan Aggregate Association
Mike Nystrom - Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association
Chuck Mills - Michigan Pavement Association
John Schmitt – Michigan Groundwater Association
Chuck Mills with the Michigan Pavement Association