

2010 Policy Forum

WEST MICHIGAN

September 16 – 17, 2010
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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POLICY FORUM SET TO CONTINUE MOVING MICHIGAN'S ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS AGENDA FORWARD

Local, state and national views will help bolster progress on state policy initiatives

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – May 7, 2010 – The 2010 West Michigan Policy Forum, a program of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce (GRACC), continues in its efforts to move five strategic policy directives forward as Michigan gets ready for another state election cycle. The two-day Sept. 16-17 event will take place in Grand Rapids at the DeVos Place Convention Center.

Several hundred business and community leaders from throughout Michigan have already engaged in the discussion and prioritization of the five key directives. In addition to reviewing how to put a fast track on legislation tied to the policy directives, the forum will host a dynamic range of speakers sharing best practices for helping Michigan move forward faster.

The initial list of speakers includes William Clay Ford, Jr., executive chairman of Ford Motor Co., Brian Wesbury, a prominent economic forecaster and Chief Economist at First Trust Advisors L.P. and Michael Fleming, president, American Chamber of Commerce Executives.

"This year's event continues our focus on the 2008 Forum's five policy directives," said Jeanne Englehart, President & CEO of the GRACC. The directives were identified and prioritized by the more than 650 business leaders in attendance at the 2008 Forum. "The 2010 Forum will also give participants the chance to meet and/or hear from Michigan gubernatorial candidates as well

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as a number of potential Michigan house and senate candidates following Michigan's primary," Englehart added.

Wesbury will open the event with a discussion of Michigan's economy, specifically why other states are recovering from the national recession faster. William Clay Ford, Jr. will close the two-day discussion focusing on the opportunities and challenges facing Michigan's economy.

There will also be a "report card update" based on the policy directives' progress to date.

Other discussions being scheduled include a review of Michigan's budget spending priorities in comparison to other Midwest states, a look at Michigan's infrastructure and international trade opportunities, a review of how some states are streamlining government services and a discussion on right to work and how it is benefiting other states.

Leading up to the September 2010 Forum, there has been a series of discussions with business leaders in Kalamazoo, Saginaw and Traverse City, and more are planned in other areas in Michigan leading up to the event.

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Editors note: Attached is a list of the five policy directives, biographies of the speakers and a complete list of the steering committee from throughout Michigan.