

SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7370
Fax: 517-373-1373 • E-mail: sendemstaff@senate.michigan.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 7, 2009

Contact: Alex Rossman
Phone: 517-373-6091

Senators Cherry and Gleason Continue Fight for Michigan Workers, Pass Bills to Hire Michigan Workers First

Democratic priority to give incentives for hiring more Michigan workers finally approved by the full Senate

LANSING, Mi. — Senator Deb Cherry (D-Burton) and Senator John J. Gleason (D-Flushing) joined their colleagues in the State Senate to approve portions of the Hire Michigan First legislation which will give incentives to companies that hire Michigan workers instead of importing workers from out-of-state. Senate Democrats have been fighting for this legislation for years with several efforts to move the bills, repeated calls for action, and town hall meetings around the state.

“Just as I’ve stood on the picket lines with workers who saw their jobs being done by out-of-state workers, we will stand with the Michigan workers who may have jobs now as a result of the progress made on this legislation,” said Senator John J. Gleason (D-Flushing), a lead advocate for this legislation. “But I also promise not to abandon the workers who still need the rest of this plan approved to get their fair chance at earning a proper wage and providing for their family.”

The items in the Hire Michigan First package that were approved by the Senate today would ensure that the millions of dollars Michigan spends in the form of tax breaks, abatements and other economic incentives in this state will be re-invested in our workers. The bills passed would also prohibit and punish those businesses that would contract with persons not authorized to work in the United States.

“Today’s action is a victory for both Michigan workers and the future of our economy,” said Sen. Cherry. “We are sending the message that we will not leave our workers behind, we will not allow our state to fail, and we are doing everything possible to put people back to work during these difficult times.”

Senate Democrats also fought to include measures that would strengthen the bills. They sought to ensure that companies employing Michigan workers pay them a prevailing wage so that they are able to make enough money to feed their families and keep a roof over their heads. Senate Democrats also tried to correct loopholes in the bills inserted by Republicans that will make it easier for companies to not hire Michigan workers.

Additionally, three bills in the package have yet to see any Senate action:

- Senate Bill 289, a bill that would change the current law requiring vendors who contract with the state to hire not less than 50% of Michigan residents to 100% of Michigan residents
- Senate Bill 288, a bill that would allow Michigan to cancel a contract or stop payment under a contract to a vendor who knowingly hires illegal aliens or who knowingly violates Michigan's Prevailing Wage Law.
- Senate Bill 291, a bill that requires vendors under state contract to report on the number of new jobs created under the contract and the number of Michigan residents hired on that project.

#