

SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER • MARK SCHAUER • 19TH DISTRICT

Schauer Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-2426 • Fax: 517-373-2964
E-mail: senmschauer@senate.mi.gov • www.senate.mi.gov/schauer



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct 16, 2008

Contact: Tom Lenard
Phone: (517) 373-2426

Schauer Hails SmartZone Designation as Job Creator for Jackson County

As one of three new SmartZones in Michigan, Jackson Technology Park will have new tools to stimulate economic development and create jobs

LANSING, Mich. - State Senator Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) today joined Michigan Economic Development Corporation officials, several Republican and Democratic colleagues, and a number of local leaders at a reception in Jackson to unveil the designation of the Jackson Technology Park SmartZone in Blackman Township as one of three new SmartZones in Michigan.

“Securing a SmartZone is a significant step forward for us in generating economic growth and helping turn our economy around,” said Schauer. “It will help us market the Jackson community as one that has a lot to offer companies looking to start up or grow their operations.”

According to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), SmartZones provide distinct geographical locations where technology-based firms, entrepreneurs and researchers can locate in close proximity to each other and the community assets they need.

Schauer began working with local leaders in the spring and early summer of 2007, when they started meeting to discuss the potential benefits that a SmartZone and other possible new economic development tools could bring to the community. Receiving a SmartZone designation was one of the first goals that Jackson Citizens for Economic Growth (JCEG) focused its tremendous energies on, just shortly after JCEG was formed.

By the end of 2007 it was clear that legislation was needed, so Schauer worked with the MEDC and the Legislative Service Bureau and Representative Simpson's office to draft SB 1018, which he introduced in the Senate on January 16, 2008, to open up the section of law governing SmartZones to allow the MEDC to designate 3 new ones. Representative Simpson introduced this same bill in the House as HB 5609.

The SmartZone legislation ultimately passed in the form of two bills (HB 5609/Simpson and the subsequently introduced SB 1203/Richardville), and was signed by the Governor on April 23, 2008.

Schauer and his office then worked closely with the community and state officials to make sure that Jackson County's application was thorough, complete, and submitted by the July 2008 deadline.

#