NORTHERN MICHIGAN CHAMBER

ALLIANCE

ALPENA • BENZIE • CADILLAC • CHARLEVOIX • GAYLORD
PETOSKEY • TRAVERSE CITY • MARQUETTE COUNTY

Our Mission:

The partnership of the Northern Michigan Regional Chamber Alliance was established based on the premise that many legislative issues impact Northern Michigan's Upper and Lower Northern region in similar ways. These issues should be addressed regionally to maximize the influence of this 14-county chamber alliance and it's over 6,500 members.

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Partners

- Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce
- Benzie County Chamber of Commerce
- Cadillac Area Chamber of Commerce
- Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce
- Gaylord Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Lake Superior Community Partnership (Marquette County)
- Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce

Associate Partners

- Elk Rapids Chamber of Commerce
- East Jordan Chamber of Commerce
- Harbor Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
- Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce

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Guiding Principles

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- Making it easier for businesses in northern Michigan to be competitive.
- Helping strong business sectors remain strong and continue job creation in our region.
- Ensuring our workforce is educated and prepared for the future needs of northern Michigan businesses.
- Promoting investment in our public transportation and business infrastructure, including energy development, road systems, harbors, airports and broadband connectivity.

Our 2015 Priorities

Supporting Business Reforms:

- Comprehensive Statewide Energy policy that ensures energy reliability and affordability in northern Michigan.
- Support updated programs, policies, and investment in talent and workforce development, training, retention, and attraction.
  - Michigan New Jobs Training Program
- Support regulatory reforms where needed.
- Support the expansion of business infrastructure in northern Michigan.

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Our 2015 Priorities, cont.

Supporting Strategic Investment:

- Continue to close the gap in K-12 per pupil funding.
- Support investment in talent and workforce development, training, retention, and attraction.
- Support comprehensive transportation infrastructure funding, including roads, airports, rail, and shipping.
  - Reform to road and airport funding structures
- Retain/Increase funding for Pure Michigan.
- Retain funding for Great Start Readiness Program and early childhood education.

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2014 Successes

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- Helped complete the phase-out of personal property tax, and passage of Proposal 1.
  - Alliance was the Northern Michigan hub for Proposal 1.
- Help push for K-12 equity; lowered state per-pupil gap to around $850.
- Supported state budget that increased funding for roads, workforce training, and retained Pure Michigan funding
- Helped retain $56 million more federal funding for harbor dredging.
- Helped maintain $36 million in funds for small/rural hospitals.
- Produced "Virtual" Candidate Forum for primary and general elections.

Barriers to success in Northern Michigan

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- One size does not fit all. What might be good policy or program downstate or in urban areas may not fit in northern Michigan/rural areas
  - TIF/DDA reforms; certain econ. development grants/programs; MAT2
- Energy affordability and reliability – we are at the end of the cord, and have lost most of our local generation
- Cell/Broadband inconsistency
- Transportation infrastructure
  - Longer/harder to get places, move products

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Thank You.

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