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AFL-CIO APPLAUDS EFFORT TO CREATE JOBS, CRITICIZES TOY'S VOTE AGAINST PROPOSAL

Gaffney blasts Sen. Toy's effort to kill job creation

Lansing, Michigan—Michigan AFL-CIO President Mark Gaffney today applauded legislative efforts to bring job opportunities to Michigan families by passing Governor Granholm's Jobs for Michigan Investment Fund. However, Gaffney had sharp criticism for Senator Laura Toy's (R-Livonia) vote against the plan, which received broad bi-partisan support in both the House and Senate, to help create jobs for Michigan workers.

"Senator Toy has been hearing from Michigan citizens that they want action on jobs," said Gaffney. "Her actions on the Senate floor show how truly out of touch she is—we cannot wait any longer to take action to create jobs in Michigan."

The legislation passed by the Senate today would utilize a portion of projected future tobacco settlement dollars to create the 21st Century Jobs Trust Fund and the Jobs for Michigan Investment Fund. These two funds would be utilized for basic research, applied research, university technology transfers, clean energy technology and commercialization of products, process, and services to encourage the development of competitive edge technologies. This investment in the future economy would result in new job creation. The legislation would also create a board to review and competitively direct disbursements.

Senator Toy first offered an amendment to this package that would have put the issue before voters on the November 2006 ballot. Despite calls from Michigan residents and the Governor to take immediate action on jobs, Toy chose to vote no on the package after her amendment to delay action was defeated. Her amendment received harsh criticism from members of the Senate, including Republican leadership: "We need action now," insisted Senator Valde Garcia (R-Howell).

"I had hoped that Senator Toy would have voted to take immediate action for the constituents of her district," said Gaffney. "She was elected to make tough decisions, not to take a pass on issues affecting working people."

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