

## MEMORANDUM

To: MLCC Board of Directors

From: Government Affairs Committee

Date: July 23, 2013

Subject: Muskegon Community College Ballot Initiative Endorsement Consideration

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The following statement related to the Muskegon Community College ballot initiative is being submitted by the MLCC Government Affairs committee to the MLCC board for approval.

### **Recommended By:**

Passed by the MLCC Government Affairs Committee – July 19, 2013

Passed by the MLCC Board of Directors – July 24, 2013

### **Proposed Position & Recommendation:**

Last fall Muskegon Community College (MCC) went to the voters with a request to raise revenues to help with expansion projects across campus, including new science and art facilities. There was discussion the project would have MCC expanding into downtown Muskegon with an arts facility in a new or existing building. Developing a skilled workforce is important to business development. And a quality downtown is important to attract investment to the area. Therefore, the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce (MLCC) Board endorsed the millage request.

The vote failed by 670 votes, less than 1% of the more than 70,000 votes cast. We believe this was due to the large number of statewide ballot initiatives on the November 2012 ballot (6 in all) and the statewide push to “vote no on everything.” We do not believe it was a rebuke of MCC or its planned expansion.

The MCC board will go back to voters this November with a scaled down affordable version of this request. The Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber supports the new proposed millage for MCC facility upgrades with a specific statement that the art facility be located downtown. It is important the downtown location be included on the ballot. When you look around the state, almost every downtown which has experienced a rebirth during the last twenty years has several things in common. One of which is an institution of higher education anchoring its downtown. Baker College made that commitment to Muskegon and downtown with the Culinary Institute of Michigan – having MCC in the downtown will continue to add to the energy and momentum downtown continues to see.

We urge Muskegon Chamber members to notify the Muskegon Community College Board of Trustees of the importance of this proposal by **sending a letter or emailing [Cindy.DeBoef@muskegoncc.edu](mailto:Cindy.DeBoef@muskegoncc.edu) by Monday July 29**, a few days prior to the board meeting where the millage issue will be discussed and specifics recommended.