



Michigan's Corporate Lobby

Chambers of commerce advocate
for the interests of billionaires
and big business over working
families and communities

Introduction

Across the country, corporations are organized into groups created to increase and wield corporate power, both in the realm of government – via lobbying and coordinated spending on elections – and in the broader public, through public relations on behalf of the corporate community.

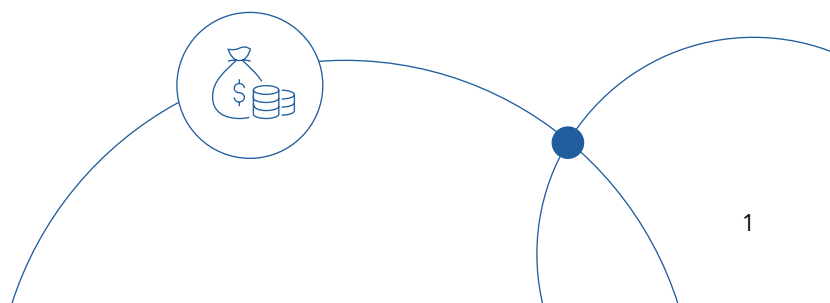
Some of these organizations, which are usually structured as non-profit corporations under section 501(c)(6) of the tax code and called trade groups or trade associations, act on behalf of specific industries, such as real estate, finance, or fossil fuels, while others represent the corporate community as a whole. These organizations are most often called chambers of commerce.

Chambers of commerce and trade groups exist at every level of political power in the United States, from the United States Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable at the national level to state-level chambers of commerce to local chambers of commerce for business interests in individual cities or towns. While trade groups and chambers of commerce hold themselves out as community advocates, working to advance broad-based prosperity and the interests of small businesses, in reality they are dominated by big business and billionaire oligarchs seeking to implement an agenda that favors the profits of a narrow slice of the population already sitting at the top of the U.S. economy. Chambers of commerce and corporate trade groups are powerful opponents of policies to protect consumers, workers, and the environment. Instead, they advocate keeping taxes on corporations and the wealthy as low as possible, while fighting against regulations against polluting the environment, and demanding that public money be spent on subsidies to the already-rich instead of investing in public goods like housing, healthcare, and education.

This report examines the networks behind three influential corporate trade groups operating in Michigan: the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce, and Business Leaders for Michigan.

These three groups, though distinct organizations operating with a degree of independence, are highly networked together with 38 major corporations – including gas and electric utility monopolies, major manufacturers and regional employers, and billionaire-owned corporate conglomerates – occupying governing roles on the boards of two or more of these groups. Together these three groups have spent millions of dollars on political influence in Michigan through a network of political action committees, super PACs, and teams of lobbyists on top of the millions spent by all of their members individually.

This funnel of money into politics through tightly-networked organizations of corporate elites adds up to a massive political machine aimed at shaping, and if necessary subverting, the public will and democratic government in order to create an environment of maximal exploitation of Michigan families, workers, and the environment for the private gain of a wealthy few.



Key Findings

- Big business and billionaire interests in Michigan are organized into advocacy groups with interlocking governing boards that raise and spend millions of dollars to influence Michigan politics.
- Corporations and billionaires represented on the boards of all three groups include CMS Energy, billionaire Dan Gilbert's Rock Holdings, Comerica Bank, and energy transmission company ITC Holdings.
- Other key members of these groups include major manufacturers like Ford and GM, the two largest healthcare systems in Michigan Corewell Health and Henry Ford Health, and public and private universities like Michigan State University and Wayne State.
- Billionaires with a combined net worth of more than \$73 billion are represented on the boards of the three organizations examined in this report. Dan Gilbert, the richest man in Michigan owns corporations represented on the boards of all three groups, the Meijer family are represented on the boards of Business Leaders for Michigan and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Roger Penske is represented on the boards of Business Leaders of Michigan and the Detroit Regional Chamber, and the Ilitch family and Rhonda Stryker are both represented on the board of Business Leaders for Michigan.
- Political action committees associated with the Detroit Regional Chamber, Business Leaders for Michigan, and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce spent at least \$1.6 million on electoral influence from 2023 through 2025.
- Top beneficiaries of spending by these groups' PACs include the Michigan Republican and Democratic Parties, candidates for Michigan Supreme Court, and members of the Michigan House of Representatives Bill Schuette, Mark Tisdell, Matt Hall, and Joe Tate.

Michigan Trade Groups and the Corporate Agenda

We can think of trade groups and chambers of commerce as think tanks and policy shops for the corporate class with a few key differences.

The membership of a trade group is composed of executives from corporations within a specific industry such as real estate or restaurants. These groups focus on developing and advocating for policies that are advantageous to that specific industry. Conversely, chambers of commerce are geographically specific and, ostensibly, represent all business interests in a given city or region. The membership of a chamber will include all types of businesses but the board of directors of a chamber is typically composed of corporate executives from the major employers or most powerful corporations in that area. The board of directors steers the priorities of the chamber and the policies they advocate typically reflect this.

While configured differently, trade groups and chambers of commerce both develop policies that benefit their membership, lobby lawmakers on their policy preferences, and donate to favorable lawmakers. These configurations provide two major benefits to the corporate community:

1. These are spaces for corporate executives to network, strategize on policies advantageous to their collective interests like low wages and reduced regulation, and lean on each other for support and advice.
2. These groups allow corporate executives to effectively speak with one voice to the public and to lawmakers through the policies they advocate and their campaign donations. It may be relatively easy for a lawmaker to resist the influence of a single corporation, but when all of the major employers in a region act together, it's much harder for a lawmaker to ignore what they are asking for regardless of whether it benefits the community in which they operate.



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Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce represents corporations and businesses in the Detroit metropolitan area. In its annual tax filings, the Detroit Regional Chamber describes its mission as serving as “the voice for business and work[ing] to power the economy for Southeast Michigan through public policy, advocacy and leading regional economic development and talent initiatives.”²

The Chamber’s 2025-2026 legislative priorities include policies to cut taxes on businesses, preempting local governments from passing higher minimum wages or other labor regulations, preempting local governments from requiring wage standards in development deals, and procuring tax breaks and other public incentives for corporations.³

The Chamber also operates two related nonprofit organizations, the Detroit Regional Chamber Foundation and Michigan Future Inc., both of which are organized as 501(c)(3) charities.⁴ The Detroit Regional Chamber Foundation makes grants to local organizations, operating as a sort of soft power arm of the corporate interests running the Chamber and Michigan Future publishes white papers on areas of policy interest to the Chamber. The Chamber also has for-profit subsidiaries, Detroit Regional Chamber Services and National Commerce Group⁵, which offer business services to chamber members.

The governing board of the Detroit Regional Chamber is dominated by large corporate interests and billionaires, including many of the region’s top employers, big banks and other financial firms, utility corporations that control energy infrastructure, and corporate consulting and law and lobbying firms that provide services to big business.⁶

Dan Gilbert, the billionaire owner of Rocket Loans as well as a panoply of other businesses and a massive real estate portfolio in Detroit, has two representatives on the Detroit Regional Chamber board of directors: Jared Fleisher, the President of Bedrock, Gilbert’s real estate holding company, and Bill Emerson, the President & CEO of Rocket Companies, the umbrella brand for many of Gilbert’s real estate finance businesses.⁷ Another prominent Michigan billionaire, Roger Penske, is represented on the Detroit Regional Chamber board of directors by Rick Shearing, the Chief Operating Officer of Penske Automotive.



Photo by William Duggan on Unsplash

Some selected directors of the 89-member Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce board and the key industries they represent are named below.

Finance & Investment

Jason Tinsley

*Vice Chairman, Private Bank,
JPMorgan Chase*

Ed Siaje

Detroit President, Bank of America

Bill Emerson

President & CEO, Rocket Companies

Steve Davis

*President, Michigan Market,
Comerica Bank*

Michael Bickers

Regional President, PNC Bank

Yasmeen Jasey

*Michigan Regional President,
Citizens Bank*

Law & Lobbying

J. Michael Bernard

Equity Member, Dykema

David Foltyn

Chairman & CEO, Honigman LLP

Jeffrey Gerish

President & CEO, Plunkett Cooney

Paul Mersino

*President, CEO & Shareholder,
Butzel*

Hospitals & Health Insurance

Robert Riney

President & CEO, Henry Ford Health

Tina Freese Decker

President & CEO, Corewell Health

Tiffany Albert

*Senior Vice President, Community
Relations, Blue Cross Blue Shield of
Michigan*

Brittany Lavis

CEO, Detroit Medical Center

Manufacturing

David Dauch

Chairman & CEO, American Axle

Lisa Lunsford

CEO, GS3

George Cook

*Regional Director, State and
Local Public Policy – Midwest,
General Motors*

Christine Estereicher

*Vice President, Public Affairs,
North America, Stellantis*

Anthony Reinhart

*Director, State and Local
Government Affairs, Ford*

Energy Utilities

Trevor Lauer

*Vice Chairman and Group President,
DTE Energy*

Rejji Hayes

*Executive Vice President and Chief
Financial Officer, CMS Energy*

Krista Tanner

President, ITC Holdings

Construction & Real Estate

Kouhaila Hammer

President and CEO, Ghafari Associates

John Rakolta Jr.

Chairman and CEO, Walbridge

Gregory J. Bockart Jr.

*Vice Chairman,
Market Leader, Savills*

Jared Fleisher

President, Bedrock

Avinash Rachmale

*Chairman & CEO,
Lakeshore Global*

In its annual report to the IRS for the fiscal year ending at the end of June 2024, the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce reported \$10.9 million in revenue, a significant increase from the \$9.2 million reported in the previous year. The Chamber's top expense line was salaries and wages, including \$169,215 to Chamber President Sandry Baruah, who was paid an additional \$507,643 by the Chamber's related organizations.⁸

Michigan State Chamber of Commerce

The Michigan State Chamber of Commerce describes its mission as “[t]o promote conditions favorable to job creation and business success in Michigan” in its annual tax filing.⁹ In its 2025-2026 legislative priorities¹⁰, the organization identifies a pro-corporate and right wing agenda using vague, euphemistic language:

Fighting against wages and benefits for workers

“Advance legislation to lessen the harm of the Michigan Supreme Court’s decision on paid leave and minimum wage and make it balanced and workable for employers and employees alike.”

Maintain preemption laws that block local regulation and developer accountability

“Support the right of employers of all sizes to manage their workplaces free of undue interference by local, state and federal governments and oppose government overreach via unreasonable regulations or enforcement guidance.”

Cut taxes on corporations and the wealthy

“Champion tax policy changes that will accelerate business growth and economic activity and allow Michigan-based firms to compete globally.”

Support education privatization

“Ensure students and parents have access to high quality, student-centric educational options and students successfully transition from high school prepared to enter the workforce or go on to college or a training program.”

Pollute the environment

“Oppose overly strict liability standards and bureaucratic policies governing environmental cleanups that hinder the remediation and redevelopment of commercial and brownfield sites.”

“Protect Michigan’s energy independence through safe energy exploration and production, as well as science-based regulations that promote mining and extraction activities while being good stewards of our natural resources.”¹¹





Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash

The Michigan State Chamber of Commerce draws its membership from around the state, including the Grand Rapids area and the Upper Peninsula. Though the Chamber does not name its directors or members on its website, as a tax-exempt nonprofit, it is required to disclose its board of directors in its annual tax filing. For our analysis, we relied on the most recent tax filing publicly available from the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2024, which named 59 board members.¹² It is possible that the current composition of the board is somewhat different from the most recent data publicly available.

As of the end of the 2024 fiscal year, the Michigan Chamber board included representatives from businesses owned by three Michigan billionaires, including:

- Jared Fleisher, the CEO of Bedrock, Dan Gilbert’s real estate business¹³;
- John Van Fossen, Senior Director of Government Affairs at Meijer¹⁴; and
- Bryan Harrison, Lead Advisor of State and Local Affairs at Amway, the direct marketing business owned by the De Vos family¹⁵.

Several other board members hold positions at major corporations, including large oil and gas interests, financial institutions, energy utilities, and telecommunications firms. The law and insurance industries also both have large presences on the Michigan Chamber board. Some selected board members from major industries are named below.

Insurance

Mike Puerner
*SVP & General Counsel,
Hastings Mutual Insurance*

John Roberts
Senior Account Executive, Acrisure

Kelly Ott
*Chief Legal Officer,
Frankenmuth Insurance*

Zachary Martin
*Chief Actuary & Chief Risk Officer,
Frankenmuth Insurance*

Angela McBride
*Chief Transformation & Strategy Officer,
Amerisure Insurance*

William Woodbury
*SVP & General Counsel,
Auto-Owners Insurance*

Law & Lobbying

Kurtis Wilder
Shareholder, Butzel

Lynn Gandhi
Partner, Foley & Lardner

Michael Cox
Founder, Mike Cox Law Firm PLLC

Matthew Ackerman
Partner, Ackerman & Ackerman

Thomas Leonard
Partner, Plunkett Cooney

Peter Ruddell
Partner, Honigman

Denice Levasseur
Senior Partner, Levasseur Law

David Doyle
President, D2 Strategy & Research, LLC

John Truscott
CEO, Truscott Rossman

Finance & Investment

Steven Davis
*Michigan Market President,
Comerica Bank*

Kevin Crawley
COO, Cinnaire

Tom Kessel
*Founder & Principal,
Glengarry Capital*

David Sowerby
Managing Director, Ancora

Jeremy Holmes
CFO, West Shore Bank

Oil, Gas & Petrochemicals

Jeff Stoutenberg
*Director of State Government Affairs,
Dow*

Peter Holran
*Director of U.S. Government Relations,
Enbridge*

Dennis McCarthy
President, Blarney Castle Oil & Propane

Robert Mannes
President & CEO, Core Energy

Energy Utilities

Shaun Johnson
*Chief Legal and Administrative Officer,
CMS Energy*

Simon Whitelocke
*SVP & Chief Business Officer, ITC
Holdings*

John Garvin
*Manager – State Government Relations,
American Transmission Company*

Construction & Real Estate

Herbert Spence
Chairman, Spence Brothers

Mark Lockwood
President & CEO, Lockwood Companies

Jared Fleisher
President, Bedrock

Sean Hollister
SVP, North Central, Barton Malow

In the fiscal year ending in June 2024, the Michigan Chamber of Commerce reported \$4.5 million in revenue, primarily through membership dues. CEO James Holcomb earned \$543,065 in salary and other compensation.¹⁶

As detailed in the relevant sections below, the Chamber spent at least \$1.1 million through its three political action committees and \$42,661 on lobbying from 2023 through 2025. The Chamber has also reported making grants to several PACs, political committees, and dark money groups, including the Judicial Integrity Project, Patriots Education Project, and the Republican State Leadership Committee.

Business Leaders for Michigan

The membership of Business Leaders for Michigan is composed of individual corporate executives rather than the corporations themselves.

Business Leaders for Michigan's membership includes four billionaires and five executives from billionaire-owned companies, including:

- Hank Meijer, the billionaire Executive Chairman, and Rick Keyes, the President & CEO of the grocery chain Meijer;
- Christopher Ilitch, the son of billionaire Mary Ilitch, and President & CEO of Ilitch Holdings, which owns Little Caesars Pizza, the Motor City Casino, and the Detroit Lions and Detroit Tigers hockey and baseball teams;
- Roger S. Penske, the billionaire Chairman, and Walter P. Czarnecki, the Executive Vice President and Director of Penske Automotive;
- Dan Gilbert, the billionaire Chairman, and Bill Emerson, the President of Rocket Companies; and
- Spencer S. Stiles, the Group President, Orthopaedics & Spine, and Jody Powell, VP, Global Quality, Regulatory & Clinical of Stryker, the medical device manufacturer owned by billionaire Ronda Stryker.

Also among Business Leaders for Michigan's 89 named members and executive committee members are representatives from some of Michigan's biggest corporate interests, including banks, energy utilities, manufacturing concerns, hospitals, and universities.



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Finance & Investment

Gary Torgow

Chair, Huntington National Bank

Michael J. Jandernoa

Founder, 42 North Partners

Michael T. Ritchie

Executive Director, National & Security Business, Comerica Bank

Terrah Opferman

Managing Director & Region Manager, Commercial Banking, JPMorgan Chase

David Mannarino

Michigan Market President & Regional Commercial Executive, KeyBank

Michael G. Bickers

EVP & Regional President, Detroit & Southeast Michigan, PNC Bank

Bill Emerson

President, Rocket Companies

Dan Gilbert

Founder & Chairman, Rocket Companies

Energy Utilities

Garrick Rochow

President & CEO, CMS Energy

Rejji P. Hayes

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, CMS Energy

Jerry Norcia

Executive Chairman, DTE Energy

Trevor Lauer

Vice Chairman and Group President, DTE Energy

Manufacturing

Rachel Stewart

CEO, Gardner White Furniture

Raymond E. Scott

President & CEO, Lear Corporation

Jeff Tate

CFO, Dow Chemical

Ronald E. Hall

President & CEO, Bridgewater Interiors

Mary Culler

President, Ford Philanthropy and Chair, Michigan Central, Ford Motor Company

Mary T. Barra

Chair & CEO, General Motors

Richard A. Manoogian

Chairman Emeritus, Masco Corporation

Spencer S. Stiles

Group President, Orthopaedics & Spine, Stryker

Hospitals & Health Insurance

Tricia Keith

President & CEO, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Tina Freese Decker

President & CEO, Corewell Health

Goran Jurkovic

President & CEO, Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio & Indiana

Edwin A. Ness

President & CEO, Munson Healthcare

Robert Casalou

President & CEO, Trinity Health Michigan & Southeast Regions

Construction & Real Estate

Ryan Maibach

President & CEO, Barton Malow

Jim Willett

CFO, McKinley Inc.

William U. Parfet

Chairman & CEO, Northwood Group

Jeffrey J. Schostak

President, Schostak Development

Manny Torgow

President, Sterling Group

John Rakolta, Jr.

Chairman, Walbridge

Higher Education

Kevin M. Guskiewicz

President, Michigan State University

Domenico Grasso

President, University of Michigan

Business Leaders for Michigan reported receiving \$4.5 million in revenue in the 2024 fiscal year, primarily from membership dues.¹⁷ Of this, about \$2.1 million was spent on compensation, including a \$721,763 salary, bonus, and benefits package for President Jeffrey Donofrio.

Interlocking Boards of Michigan Trade Groups

As mentioned above, though these groups are distinct organizations, there is a significant degree of overlap in the groups’ policy agendas as well as in their membership and governing bodies.

We found that 38 corporations operating in Michigan occupy governing roles on two or more of the corporate advocacy groups examined in this report. Four businesses – gas and electric utility CMS Energy, the holding company for Dan Gilbert’s business interests Rock Holding, Comerica Bank, and electric transmission line owner ITC – have governing seats at all three organizations.

Table 1. Corporate Membership of Detroit Regional Chamber, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, and Business Leaders of Michigan

Corporation	Industry	Detroit Regional Chamber	Michigan Chamber of Commerce	Business Leaders for Michigan
CMS Energy	Energy Utility	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	Executive Committee
Rock Holdings (including Rocket Companies, Bedrock, et al)	Construction & Real Estate, Finance & Investment	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	Member
Comerica Bank	Investment	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	Member
ITC Holdings	Energy Utility	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	Member
DTE Energy	Energy Utility	Executive Committee		Executive Committee
Henry Ford Health	Healthcare	Executive Committee		Member
Corewell Health	Healthcare	Executive Committee		Member
Siebert Williams Shank	Investment	Executive Committee		Member
McKinsey & Co	Corporate Consulting	Executive Committee		Member
PNC Bank	Finance & Investment	Executive Committee		Member
American Axle	Manufacturing	Executive Committee		Member
Kelly Services	Staffing & Outsourcing	Executive Committee		Member
Huntington Bank	Investment	Executive Committee		Member
Walbridge	Construction & Real Estate	Executive Committee		Member
Detroit Pistons	Entertainment & Hospitality	Executive Committee		Member
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan	Health Insurance	Board of Directors		Member

Table 1. Corporate Membership of Detroit Regional Chamber, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, and Business Leaders of Michigan (continued)

Corporation	Industry	Detroit Regional Chamber	Michigan Chamber of Commerce	Business Leaders for Michigan
Delta Airlines	Airline	Board of Directors		Member
General Motors	Manufacturing	Board of Directors		Member
Michigan State University	Higher Education	Board of Directors		Member
Bridgewater Interiors	Manufacturing	Board of Directors		Member
Strategic Staffing Solutions	Staffing & Outsourcing	Board of Directors		Member
Deloitte	Corporate Consulting	Board of Directors		Member
Ford Motor Company	Manufacturing	Board of Directors		Member
Penske	Auto Rental	Board of Directors		Member
Bank of America	Finance & Investment	Board of Directors		Member
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Corporate Consulting	Board of Directors		Member
Gardner White Furniture	Retail	Board of Directors		Member
JPMorgan Chase	Finance & Investment	Board of Directors		Member
Ideal Group	Manufacturing	Board of Directors		Member
Franco	PR	Executive Committee	Board of Directors	
AT&T	Telecommunications	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	
Acrisure	Insurance		Board of Directors	Member
Dow	Chemicals		Board of Directors	Member
Plunkett Cooney	Law	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	
Butzel	Law	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	
Honigman	Law	Executive Committee	Board of Directors	
Meijer	Retail		Board of Directors	Executive Committee
Amerisure Insurance	Insurance		Board of Directors	Member

Political Influence of Michigan Trade Groups

PACs and Super PACs

The three corporate advocacy groups examined in this report operate at least seven political action committees through which they have funneled more than \$1.6 million of spending into donations directly to political candidates, independent super PAC spending on behalf of candidates, donations to “dark money” groups associated with public officials, and other super PACs and dark money groups.

Top beneficiaries from and donors to corporate advocacy groups’ PACs can be seen in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2. Top 10 Politicians Benefiting from PAC spending by Michigan corporate lobby organizations, 2023-2025

Name	Position	Detroit Regional Chamber	Business Leaders for Michigan	Michigan Chamber of Commerce	Total
Andrew Fink	Michigan Supreme Court			\$226,080.48	\$226,080.48
Patrick O’Grady	Michigan Supreme Court			\$222,097.30	\$222,097.30
Matthew Ackerman	Michigan Supreme Court			\$139,877.86	\$139,877.86
Bill Schuette	Michigan House – 95		\$53,500 ¹⁸	\$3,250	\$56,750
Mark Tisdell	Michigan House – 55		\$20,000 ¹⁹	\$28,000	\$48,000
Matt Hall	Michigan House – 42	\$6,500	\$15,000 ²⁰	\$22,512.23	\$44,012.23
Joe Tate	Michigan House – 9	\$14,500	\$10,000 ²¹	\$12,000	\$36,500
Kathy Schmaltz	Michigan House – 46			\$29,000	\$29,000
Steve Frisbie	Michigan House – 44			\$27,250	\$27,250
Rylee Linting	Michigan House – 27			\$26,250	\$26,250

Source: Michigan Campaign Finance Database

Table 3. Top 10 corporate donors to Michigan corporate lobby PACs (corporations, PACs, and employees), 2023-2025

Corporation	Detroit Regional Chamber	Business Leaders for Michigan	Michigan Chamber of Commerce	Total
Meijer		\$45,000	\$50,000	\$95,000
Edw. C. Levy Company		\$50,500	\$31,000	\$81,500
Amerisure			\$60,800	\$60,800
Huizenga Group			\$56,000	\$56,000
Strategic Staffing Solutions		\$55,000		\$55,000
ITC Holdings	\$2,000	\$52,000		\$54,000
Frankenmuth Insurance			\$53,000	\$53,000
Gardner-White Furniture		\$40,000		\$40,000
CMS Energy	\$3,000	\$33,000	\$2,000	\$38,000
DTE Energy	\$3,000	\$32,000		\$35,000

Source: Michigan Campaign Finance Database

Lobbying

All together, the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, Business Leaders for Michigan, and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on lobbying from 2023 through August 2025, the most recent date for which lobbying data is available.

Unfortunately, lobbying filings do not report specifically which bills and regulations that lobbyists and the corporations and organizations that hire them are targeting or what positions they are seeking to convince public officials to take. Rather, in lobbying disclosure filings, clients refer to their activities in extremely broad and vague terms, such as: “During the course of providing lobbying services, representatives of MHSA, PAA & McAlvey Merchant communicated with public officials with respect to administrative or legislative action” (Business Leaders for Michigan), “Detroit Regional Chamber’s public policy and business advocacy priorities” (Detroit Regional Chamber), and “Tax/Business/Economic Issues” (Michigan Chamber of Commerce).

However, lobbying disclosures do require lobbying clients to disclose the amount they have spent on lobbying twice per year as well as the names of the people hired to lobby on the client’s behalf.

From these filings, we can see that the three trade groups examined in this report have spent a total of more than \$320,000 on lobbying from 2023 through August 2025, the most recent date for which data is available from all three organizations. The top lobbying spender was Business Leaders for Michigan, which spent more than \$237,000 on lobbying in this time period, accounting for more than 74% of the total lobbying spending.²²

Complete figures for lobbying spending can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 4. Lobbying spending by Michigan corporate lobby organizations, 2023 - August 2025.

Year	Detroit Regional Chamber	Business Leaders for Michigan	Michigan Chamber of Commerce	Total
2023	\$20,000.00	\$86,147.82	\$17,596.43	\$123,744.25
2024	\$12,000.00	\$110,326.83	\$16,331.53	\$138,658.36
January - August 2025	\$12,000.00	\$41,317.54	\$4,398.75	\$57,716.29
Total	\$44,000.00	\$237,792.19	\$38,326.71	\$320,118.90

Source: Michigan Lobbying Disclosure Database

Photo by Jonathan Borba on Unsplash



Endnotes

1. The Detroit Regional Chamber reported revenue of \$10,912,696, Michigan Chamber of Commerce reported \$4,476,129, and Business Leaders for Michigan reported \$4,069,513 in their Form 990 tax returns, available on ProPublica's Nonprofit Explorer tool at: <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/>
2. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/380477570/202403559349300015/full>
3. <https://www.detroitchamber.com/advocacy/policy-priorities/>
4. See Schedule R <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/380477570/202403559349300015/full>
5. See Schedule R <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/380477570/202403559349300015/full>
6. <https://www.detroitchamber.com/about/board-of-directors/>
7. <https://www.detroitchamber.com/about/board-of-directors/>
8. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/380477570/202403559349300015/full>
9. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/381626029/202501359349307110/full>
10. <https://www.michamber.com/keybills/legislative-priorities/>
11. <https://www.flipbookpdf.net/web/files/uploads/4c30c3614073e4010924924f3802734ce0bb26f5FBP26673246.pdf>
12. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/381626029/202501359349307110/full>
13. <https://www.detroitchamber.com/bios/jared-fleisher/>
14. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-van-fossen-94b4191/>
15. <https://amwayvotes.com/contact-us>
16. <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/381626029/202501359349307110/full&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1769723808332536&usg=AOvVaw1KPvI8jqyEOZB-6CIRnQ6N>
17. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/381941576/202543159349302174/full>
18. Includes \$40,000 donation from Super PAC to Moving Mid-Michigan Forward, a group that shares its name with Schuette's campaign slogan. See e.g. <https://billgschuette.com/>
19. Includes \$9,000 donation from Super PAC to administrative account sharing Hall's campaign address
20. Includes \$5,000 donation from Super PAC to associated nonprofit, Building a Better Economy
21. Includes \$10,000 donation from Super PAC to associated nonprofit, Citizens for a Better Michigan
22. <https://mi-boe.entellitrak.com/etk-mi-boe-prod/page.request.do?page=page.miboeLobbyPublicSearch>