NORTHERN MICHIGAN CHAMBER ALLIANCE

Q3 PARTNER UPDATE



BUILDING OPPORTUNITY UP NORTH

OPPORTUNITY ZONES 2.0



The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance has spent months advocating for northern Michigan to receive its fair share of the state's next round of Opportunity Zones, and for those zones to land in places where investment can actually happen.

Created in 2017 under the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Opportunity Zones offer tax benefits for investments made in designated census tracts. The U.S. Treasury determines which tracts are eligible, and each governor nominates up to 25% of those tracts for designation. The new round, known as OZ 2.0, takes effect January 1, 2027, and designations last 10 years. Under OZ 2.0, investments in rural zones also receive a larger tax benefit than those in non-rural zones.

The Alliance has worked with partners across the region to make the case for northern Michigan tracts throughout the state's nomination process. In partnership with U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman's office, the Alliance also pushed for key areas that are not currently eligible, including sites in Gaylord and Sault Ste. Marie, to be considered. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is guiding the state's nominations, and the Alliance will share the final designations with partners as soon as they are announced.

Learn more at michiganbusiness.org/opportunityzones.

DEFENSE MANUFACTURING

On August 19, Alliance partners from across the region toured Saab's new manufacturing facility in Grayling. The visit focused on how defense manufacturers select and prepare sites, what draws the industry to northern Michigan, and how the region can do more to grow its defense sector. Saab's investment is already opening doors for growth across the region.



LEARN MORE ABOUT SAAB IN GRAYLING

ELECTION SEASON

CONNECTING CANDIDATES AND BUSINESS LEADERS

With major statewide and federal races on the ballot, the Alliance worked to put northern Michigan's business priorities in front of candidates and to bring those races directly to voters and employers up north.



ENDORSEMENTS

In July, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce joined the Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance to announce its endorsement of U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman, who represents Michigan's 1st Congressional District, covering northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. Rep. Bergman has been a strong partner on the Alliance's priorities, including working with the Alliance this year to make the case for new Opportunity Zone eligibility in Gaylord and Sault Ste. Marie.

MANISTEE CANDIDATE FORUM

On September 10, Alliance Director Dakota Baker moderated the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce's candidate forum, featuring 102nd District State House candidates Rep. Curt VanderWall and Angel Coon, 32nd District State Senate candidates Kim Cole and Rebecca Amidon, and candidates for the Manistee Area Public Schools Board of Education.









ROUNDTABLE WITH SENATE MAJORITY LEADER WINNIE BRINKS

On September 11, the Alliance hosted Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, a candidate for lieutenant governor, in Traverse City for a roundtable with regional business leaders on the issues that matter most to northern Michigan's economy.

BRINGING BIG RACES UP NORTH

AGREE TO DISAGREE AND U.S. SENATE CANDIDATE FORUMS

On September 21, the Alliance hosted its annual Agree to Disagree event featuring Kyle Melinn, John Sellek and Adrian Hemond. Following the event, the Alliance hosted U.S. Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed for a candidate forum. The series continued in October with U.S. Senate candidate Mike Rogers at Kirkbride Hall in Traverse City.

The Alliance takes pride in bringing major candidates and statewide offices to northern Michigan to engage directly with voters and business leaders.

SECRETARY OF STATE CANDIDATE ROUNDTABLE

On October 6, the Alliance hosted Macomb County Clerk Anthony Forlini, candidate for secretary of state, for a roundtable with regional business leaders. It was part of the Alliance's ongoing effort to bring statewide candidates to the region ahead of Election Day.

ELECTION SEASON







VOTE NO ON PROPOSAL 1

The Alliance joined a large, bipartisan statewide coalition opposing Proposal 1, which asked voters whether to call a convention to rewrite the Michigan Constitution. A constitutional convention would leave business leaders facing nothing but uncertainty, with political infighting and a media circus that would take a toll on Michigan's business climate.



On November 3, Michigan voters rejected Proposal 1 by a wide margin, keeping in the state's constitution in place.

GROWING THE ALLIANCE

Please join us in welcoming our newest partners and thanking those who expanded their investment in the Alliance this quarter.

Partners

- **Mackinac Island Tourism** - NEW
- **Cadillac Area Chamber** and **Elk Rapids Area Chamber**

Supporting Partners

- **Sault Area Chamber** and **Alpena Area Chamber**
- **Otsego County Economic Alliance** and **Networks Northwest** - NEW

Strategic Affiliate Partner

- **Small Business Association of Michigan**

ALLIANCE MEMBERS

PARTNERS

Cadillac Area Chamber of Commerce · Charlevoix Chamber · Develop Iosco · Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce · Gaylord Area Chamber of Commerce · Mackinac Island · Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce · The Petoskey Chamber · Traverse Connect

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Alpena Area · Make it Benzie Area Chamber of Commerce · Investup · Mackinaw City Chamber of Commerce · Northern Lakes Economic Alliance · Networks Northwest · OCEA Otsego County Economic Alliance · Sault Area Chamber of Commerce

ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce · Cheboygan Area Chamber of Commerce · East Jordan – Ellsworth – Atwood · Harbor Springs Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center · Grand Traverse Regional Chamber of Commerce

STRATEGIC AFFILIATE PARTNER

Small Business Association of Michigan

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