



Dear Friends,

As a State Senator, I am committed to do everything possible to enhance job creation and improve the challenging economic conditions of Michigan. Please understand that an economy will not become robust with the flip of a switch. Improving our economy will take a lot, I mean a lot, of hard work, and many very difficult decisions will have to be made. Over the last two years, great strides have been made, but we still have a way to go. A quick example: In 2009, our unemployment rate was 13.4%. In 2012, it was 8.9%. A 4.5% drop in unemployment in three years is impressive.

I have owned my business in Macomb County for almost 34 years. I believe that I have the credentials to say that Michigan is not a business-friendly state. We have been excessively over-regulated, highly unionized and, until last year, businesses, especially small businesses, had to operate within a very onerous tax structure. There is no question in my mind that we have the ability to make Michigan extremely business-friendly. If we do this, we will both attract businesses from other states and give our own residents a reason to start their own businesses right here in Michigan. This all translates into jobs, plenty of them!

There is no question that the vote to make Michigan the 24th Right to Work state in the country was a highly controversial issue. I voted yes because I believe this is best for the workers and the economic health of our state's economy. As a side note, there are half a dozen other states in the nation that are on the cusp of becoming Right to Work. RTW is a complex issue and I supported it for numerous reasons, none of which had anything to do with union busting.

I have always been involved with athletics, started my business right out of the trunk of my car and ran for political office. I have learned a lot along the way. However, there is one variable that always sticks out: If you, as a business person, athlete, politician or worker, ignore and do not respond to the actions of your competition, you will fail! In February 2012, the state of Indiana became a Right to Work state. Do you know what happened? The "neighborhood" just got tougher and much more competitive. I challenge anyone, from any walk of life or from any political persuasion, to look me in the eye and tell me that Indiana's actions regarding RTW did not have negative ramifications on our workers and on Michigan's ability to compete.

As you know, Indiana is contiguous to Michigan. Since Indiana became RTW, it has attracted 90 major businesses and commitments which will create a boon for the workers in Indiana. Let us consider the potential positive financial impact on Michigan's workers and businesses by Michigan becoming RTW. From 2000-2010 PER CAPITA INCOME in Michigan grew by 20%. During the same time frame in RTW states, PER CAPITA INCOME grew by 39%. From 2000-2010, Michigan's job growth dropped almost 17%, while in RTW states, it grew by 4%. From 1998-2011, the growth of our gross

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"I AM WORKING FOR YOU!"

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state product grew by 26.5%. During the same time frame in RTW states, it grew by a stunning 85%. (Source: Northwood University: 2012 Michigan Economic Competitiveness Study). From 2000-2010, Michigan's personal income growth shrank by 5%. In the same time frame, the RTW states averaged 24.9% with Texas leading the way with 31.4% in personal income growth. (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics). Over the years, I have heard much shallow rhetoric from a lot of people in Lansing about their desire to create jobs. Action always speaks louder than words! If you really want to make our economy great again and help workers, you simply cannot ignore this data.

I have learned that each time I am faced with a controversial issue, whether I vote yes or no, at the end of the day somebody is not going to like my vote. It never fails. So, instead of worrying about special interest groups, I just focus on the 311,000 people who I represent and ask myself what is best for them. In the case of RTW, I asked myself a simple question: Should it be illegal for a worker to be forced to pay a third party fee to obtain a job or keep a job? My answer was yes.

Major concerns that I had all during the RTW debate were the issues of workplace fairness, equality and the right to choose. Why should a worker not have a choice whether to pay dues to a union or any other entity? Why should a worker not have a choice in having part of their dues support a political candidate or party that they privately do not support? Over the years, there has been quite a bit of talk about abortion and a woman's right to choose. What about a worker's right to choose whether or not to pay dues? I find it very ironic that the same people who wholeheartedly support one kind of choice vehemently oppose RTW and the worker's right to choose!

A question I would like to ask all of you is this: What is your opinion in regard to what has happened economically in Michigan over the last ten years? As a father of four children, husband, business owner, officeholder and a very concerned worker myself, my opinion is that the last ten years have been financially tragic. It is not necessary to go into all of the details as to why I think this; I only want to move forward. I have every confidence that we can make our state great again. Is Right to Work the silver bullet that will end all or cure all of our economic ills? No, it is not, but it certainly is a game changer. I have pledged not only to every worker in my district, but to every worker in the state of Michigan, that I will do everything in my power to return our great state back to its former greatness. This is my number one priority.

In closing, I always like to hear your opinions. Please do not hesitate to contact me. As always, it is my pleasure and my honor to serve as your State Senator. Have a great New Year and God bless!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack Brandenburg

State Senator - District 11