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Consumer Group Condemns U.S. Chamber of Commerce Report Attacking Wisconsin

New York – The Center for Justice & Democracy (CJ&D) today called the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s fifth annual state liability rankings report, which attacks Wisconsin’s business environment, “dishonest, unfair, and contrary to the evidence about the state’s positive business climate.” In its report expected to be released on March 27, the Chamber criticizes the business litigation climate of Wisconsin based on nothing more than the views of corporate lawyers who defend corporate wrongdoers, and will likely attack state political leaders because they have supported consumers’ legal rights.

Joanne Doroshow, Executive Director of CJ&D, said, “The U.S. Chamber seems utterly unconcerned with either protecting the health and safety of Wisconsin consumers or with being honest with the public about the actual business climate of Wisconsin, which is, in fact, strong and growing.”

Wisconsin was one of only seven states to make the “economic honor roll” in the 2006 annual report card of the states compiled by the Corporation for Enterprise Development, a national economic development organization. In the study, Wisconsin earned an “A” for economic performance. Governor Jim Doyle commented, “We are starting more businesses in Wisconsin, and our businesses are competing successfully for markets both here and around the world.” According to several reports, Wisconsin’s business environment has also proven strong in areas of job growth, income distribution, and development capacity, among others.

According to Doroshow, “[The U.S. Chamber, for several years, has used its annual rankings to publicly, dishonestly, and inaccurately criticize the business climates of states using a questionable survey of corporate lawyers including in-house counsel for major corporations. These surveys reflect nothing more than the Chamber’s political agenda to limit legitimate lawsuits and accountability for corporate wrongdoers.”

For CJ&D’s fact sheet on the Chamber’s attack on Wisconsin, please see
http://www.centerjd.org/free/mythbusters-free/MB_ChamberWisconsin.pdf

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