

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 6, 2006

CONTACT: Ginny Smith
(202) 463-5824

**U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform Statement on
Wisconsin Governor's Veto of Jobs Preservation Act**
*Wisconsin Remains Only State in Nation With
'Guilty-Until-Proven-Innocent' Standard in Product Liability Cases*

Lisa A. Rickard, president of the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, issued the following statement today:

“Governor Doyle today missed an opportunity to shut off the lawsuit spigot that is threatening to drown Wisconsin’s employers, large and small. By vetoing SB 402 – The Jobs Preservation Act – he opposed the majority of Wisconsin’s elected legislators and endorsed the “guilty-until-proven-innocent” standard that is allowing opportunistic plaintiffs’ lawyers to prey upon the state’s job creators.

“Despite claims by Governor Doyle and the plaintiffs’ bar to the contrary, this bill would have protected a broad array of Wisconsin employers. According to the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, 13 Wisconsin companies have been sued so far under the Wisconsin “guilty-until-proven-innocent” standard -- and not one of them has produced lead paint.

“The people of Wisconsin need only look to their neighbor to the south – Illinois – to see the drastic repercussions of lawsuit abuse. Illinois – ranked 46th out of 50 states in legal fairness in a recent Harris Survey – is in the midst of a jobs crisis, having lost hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs in the past five years. Hopefully, Wisconsin employers will not suffer the same fate as a result of the governor’s action today.”