New MI Federal Ruling on Mackinac Island Ferry Operations

Detroit – July 2, 2025 – Dykema, a leading national law firm, announced that its litigation team obtained a preliminary injunction in federal court. On behalf of Shepler's Inc. and Mackinac Island Ferry Company, firm secures the injunction. The ruling effectively blocks the City of Mackinac Island from enforcing a newly adopted ordinance that sought to impose new regulatory controls on ferry operations.

The injunction, issued by Judge Robert J. Jonker of the U.S. The District Court for the Western District of Michigan prevents the enforcement of Ordinance No. 629. The ordinance was scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2025. It aimed to grant the City broad authority over ferry fares and services. This included regulating parking and luggage fees. This was despite the existence of an ongoing franchise agreement between the parties.

Judge Jonker's opinion highlighted the strong likelihood that Dykema's clients would succeed on the merits of their claims. He noted that neither party has the unilateral authority to determine when competition has ceased under the existing agreement. The judge also emphasized that maintaining the status quo was in the best interest of both the public and the parties involved, particularly during the Island's busy summer season.

"This case touches on key issues of municipal authority and contract law," said Mark Magyar, who led the Dykema team. "We're happy that the Court recognized the importance of preserving the long-standing agreement between the parties as these issues are addressed."

The injunction allows ferry operations to continue under the existing terms. It ensures continuity for residents, businesses, and the millions of tourists who visit Mackinac Island annually.

In addition to Magyar, Rick Aaron and Steve Liedel were part of the Dykema litigation team.
The case is ongoing.

About Dykema

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