



South County Chambers of Commerce Public Policy Principles and Speaking Guidelines

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Mission Statement

"The mission of the South County Chambers of Commerce is to create partnerships and opportunities that ensure South County businesses prosper."

Purpose and Use

This document serves as a framework for public policy positions and speaking guidance for the South County Chambers of Commerce. It is designed to be used by the Board, Chairperson, and CEO, to ensure consistent advocacy and communication on key issues affecting the South County business community in accordance with the bylaws. These policy principles and guidelines reflect the Chamber's role in advocating for a thriving business climate, regulatory efficiency, and economic growth while balancing community needs.

Economic Development

Policy Principle: Promote, preserve, and enhance a positive business climate and maintain competitiveness.

Guidelines:

- Support business incentive programs that take into account workforce trends, including the need to emphasize bio and high technology training.
- Support effective and timely communication between business, labor, and the education community to assure that education and training programs are targeted to the needs of business.
- Support programs and legislation that will enhance the quality of life in South San Luis Obispo County.
- Support a more balanced regulatory climate that enables businesses to overcome barriers to economic growth and comply with reasonable regulatory requirements.

Environmental Quality

Policy Principle: Promote the protection of our environment without sacrificing economic prosperity or competitiveness.

Guidelines:

- Support legislation that recognizes that environmental quality and economic development are not mutually exclusive goals, and that creates a balance to ensure businesses have the ability to grow and remain competitive.
- Support the involvement of regulated business in developing environmental protection, pollution prevention, and emissions reduction strategies.

- Support measures that utilize incentives, and not command-and-control approaches in the pursuit of environmental quality.
- Support environmental regulations that are based upon sound science (e.g., realistic risk assessments, accurate pollutant inventories, and credible environmental and economic models), and produce achievable, cost effective, and measurable benefits to public health and the environment.
- Support environmental laws and regulations that provide general direction, and overall policy and performance goals, rather than codify prescriptive requirements that restrict creativity to accomplish the desired result.
- Support policies that do not add additional financial burdens on businesses without remuneration or, at minimum, allow implementation over time.
- Oppose environmental laws and regulations that create criminal liability without requiring traditional criminal intent.
- Oppose legislation that gives too much discretion to government agencies and officials, or too little oversight, or opportunity, to appeal an agencies or official's decision.

Government Efficiency

Policy Principle: Promote a continuous, ongoing review of the role of government in providing essential public services for the purposes of making government more understandable, more efficient, more transparent, and more accountable to voters, taxpayers, and businesses.

Guidelines:

- Support government which is streamlined in size and scope of authority so as to be more understandable to the public.
- Support existing mandates for accountability and oversight of government agencies to reduce waste and abuse of power.
- Support cost-effective municipal services to their communities.
- Support the elimination of state and federal mandates if not adequately funded; local control must be restored to agencies that deliver local services.
- Support decentralization, and more local control where appropriate.
- Support reform of local government pension programs.
- Oppose future state raids on local government funding.
- Oppose unnecessary duplication among and within government departments and agencies.

Public Safety

Policy Principle: Promote measures enhancing the public safety of the businesses and residents of South County.

Guidelines:

- Support a strong state, county, and local public safety emergency response system, including police, fire, and medical treatment components that enhance the safety of residents and workers, and the preservation of life and property.
- Support awareness programs from all levels of public, and private organizations that educate people about business, home, and personal safety and protection.
- Support legislation and funding for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of white-collar, investment-fraud, and other business-related crimes.

Housing Element

Policy Principle: Promote a robust housing market, which is essential to sustain economic growth and community well-being.

Guidelines:

- Support policies that streamline the housing development process, reducing regulatory burdens, and assure jurisdiction fees are responsible.
- Support policies that enhance the affordability and availability of diverse housing options.
- Support policies that approve projects in reasonable, established timelines, with requirements that jurisdictions abide by those timelines.
- Support the concept of “Up Zoning” to allow for more residential housing in commercially zoned areas.
- Support public-private partnerships that address homelessness issues
 - Support programs to ensure homeless individuals and families can quickly transition to stable housing.

Regulatory Reform/Permit Streamlining

Policy Principle: Promote the creation of reasonable, fair, cost-effective, fiscally and technically sound, streamlined and simplified, regulatory environment that is business friendly, and does not put the South County at a competitive disadvantage.

Guidelines:

- Support measures that reduce administrative burdens on businesses created by regulation, and permit requirements.
- Support placing the burden on government agencies to justify any new regulations, including requiring agencies to evaluate alternatives.
- Support measures that harmonize California and federal regulations, including a requirement that state and local agencies justify adopting any regulation that differs from federal regulations.
- Support programs to educate businesses on regulatory and permitting requirements and assist businesses in complying with those requirements.

Conclusion

This framework ensures the South County Chambers of Commerce maintains a strong, unified voice in advocacy efforts while reinforcing business growth, economic prosperity, and responsible governance. These principles should guide Chamber leadership in public representation, policy discussions, and community engagement.