

The Small Business Advocacy Council (SBAC) is laser-focused on formulating and fighting to pass policies that support small businesses and local communities. The SBAC's 2023 agenda includes legislation that will support small businesses struggling to hire and retain employees and stabilize the costs of health insurance. The SBAC is also advocating for bills that will increase transparency and level the playing field for small businesses vying for government contracts. Our agenda includes the following legislation:

**HEALTH
INSURANCE
HB 2296**

PASSED

The health insurance premiums of small businesses are skyrocketing. Many small businesses are having difficulty affording the cost of health insurance and premium increases are impacting the ability of small businesses to hire and retain talent. SB 1912 will protect small businesses unable to control the costs of increasing health insurance premiums while leveling the playing field for the small business community. HB 2296 will give the Illinois Department of Insurance the authority to take a more active role in reviewing and approving rate increases for small businesses. This legislation will help prevent small businesses from being hit with excessive premium increases while ensuring information is provided to the public that explains the reason insurance premiums continue to increase.

**PROCUREMENT
BIDDING
REFORM
SB 2192**

PASSED

Small businesses play a critical role in Illinois' economy. Helping small businesses receive their fair share of state procurement contracts is important for job creation and the success of the state's small businesses. HB2878 requires an annual report on the progress state departments and agencies have made on meeting mandated targets. This legislation will add additional requirements to the good faith exception rule that allows state departments and agencies to sidestep contracting goals. HB2878 also establishes a pilot program within the Department of Transportation that allows select small businesses to post a letter of credit rather than a surety bond for awarded state contracts.

**THE SAFER
COMMUNITIES &
SMALL
BUSINESS ACT
HB 3418**

Illinois businesses are struggling to hire qualified employees, impacting their operations and recovery from the pandemic. The unemployment rate among formerly incarcerated individuals is extremely high. This undermines public safety and contributes to high recidivism rates. HB 3418 will support small businesses struggling to hire employees, foster opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals, improve public safety, and reduce the costs of incarceration. This initiative will provide wage subsidies to businesses that hire formerly incarcerated individuals and increased tax incentives to small businesses that hire returning citizens.

**TRANSPARENCY
BILL
HB 2878**

PASSED

Each year Illinois awards government contracts to businesses. These contracts cover everything from construction projects to professional services. Small businesses that drive our economy often have difficulty competing for these government contracts. The same is true for minority and women-owned businesses. House Bill 2368 will increase transparency among agencies that award government contracts. This will help the public assess whether state agencies are meeting their goals and how tax dollars are being spent on government contracts.

**REDUCE
VACANCIES IN
LOCAL
COMMUNITIES**

Commercial properties that remain vacant for unreasonable periods of time negatively impact local economies and public safety. Prolonged vacancies can devastate neighborhood business districts. Property owners in Cook County can seek a reduction in their property taxes when their properties are fully or partially vacant. Reducing vacancies in neighborhood business districts will support and revitalize neighborhood business districts throughout Cook County. Let's transform vacant properties into thriving small businesses.