

2024

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Springfield
Area Chamber of Commerce

2024 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce represents more than 1,500 business, professional and community organizations that employ more than 230,000 people working in and around Missouri's third largest city.

Our advocacy efforts are member driven and focus on improving the business climate to grow jobs, develop the workforce and drive investment in the state.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Strong economic development policies are essential for driving job creation, supporting both employers and employees, and fostering the success and growth of communities.

AGRIBUSINESS

The Chamber supports policies that will strengthen domestic agriculture and food production, promote exports and ensure a safe and stable food supply.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT & INNOVATION

The Chamber supports programs that incentivize capital investment, small business assistance and access to early stage capital and support.

The Chamber encourages funding for IDEA Commons, including Missouri State University's Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center (JVIC) and efactory, to support private sector-led research and development, entrepreneurship, small business and job creation.

The Chamber supports evidence-based Artificial Intelligence (AI) regulations that prioritize responsible development, employer and employee well-being, and risk mitigation. We oppose regulations that may result in unintended consequences due to inadequate consultation with experts.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Chamber supports efforts to improve access to capital for minority owned businesses and entrepreneurs.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Chamber supports international trade policies that encourage economic development, reduce trade barriers, protect U.S. intellectual property, eliminate unfair trade practices, and protect national security. The Chamber also supports the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

SUPPLY CHAIN

The Chamber supports innovative policies to improve performance of supply chains for businesses and consumers including, in particular, removal and reduction of regulatory burdens as appropriate.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EXPENSES

The Chamber supports reinstating the immediate deduction of Section 174 specified research and experimental (SRE) expenditures.

BUSINESS CLIMATE

A strong business climate is critical to the economic success of Missouri and the United States. Business growth creates jobs that support communities, families and individuals.

LABOR RELATIONS

The Chamber supports labor policies that enhance, not inhibit, economic growth and job creation.

The Chamber supports the right of workers to voluntarily join unions under fair and democratic rules but opposes legislation that would impose new and costly regulations on businesses or stifle productivity and economic growth.

MINIMUM WAGE

A strong and growing economy is the best way to increase wages. Should Congress consider raising the minimum wage, the increase should be driven by economic data and market conditions.

PREVAILING WAGE & EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION

The Chamber supports modifications to the existing Davis-Bacon Act in order to remove barriers for small business owners and contractors competing for federally funded projects.

The Chamber supports legislation that protects the legitimate use of independent contractors.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY & GOVERNANCE

The Chamber supports a balanced federal budget, a reduced national debt and meaningful efforts to reduce inflation.

BANKING AND FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM

The Chamber supports measures that reduce regulatory burdens, particularly on community banks.

ABLE AGE ADJUSTMENT

The Chamber supports increasing the eligibility age of beneficiaries for ABLE accounts to the onset of disability before age 46.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

The Chamber opposes unfunded and underfunded federal legislative mandates.

ADA REFORM

The Chamber supports reform to the Americans with Disabilities Act by requiring prior written notice from the claimant to the respondent, of the nature and location of any claimed violation and a reasonable opportunity to correct the violation before a claim for attorney fees can be made.

AUTOMOTIVE RIGHT TO REPAIR

The Chamber supports the preservation of consumer access to automotive repairs that promotes a competitive marketplace while maintaining the safety of the vehicle.

FINCEN REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Chamber supports removing burdensome requirements placed on businesses through the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting Requirements Final Rule.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Chamber supports continued investment in all levels of public education and workforce training. Developing the workforce through two-and-four-year higher education systems, as well as alternative pathways including credentialing, apprenticeship programs and training, are all key to the region's success.

PELL GRANTS

The Chamber supports modifying Pell Grants to allow funding for regionally accredited public two-year colleges to offer short-term workforce training.

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

The Chamber supports federal funding for Ozarks Technical Community College's workforce development initiatives, and for STEM, healthcare and agriculture facilities and related programs at Missouri State University.

APPRENTICESHIPS

The Chamber supports continued and robust federal funding for apprenticeships and the reevaluation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state allocation formula to provide additional flexibility and increased allocations for vital apprenticeship programs.

CHILDCARE INVESTMENTS

The Chamber supports innovative funding opportunities aimed at addressing the challenges of recruiting and retaining childcare providers.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

The Chamber supports balanced energy and environmental policies that are equitable to all regions and industries, foster innovation and economic growth, encourage energy sustainability, and consider quality of life.

The Chamber opposes policies that would unduly raise energy costs for business or jeopardize the creation of jobs. As Congress considers environmental and energy policy, it is crucial that states like Missouri are not put at an economic disadvantage because of limited ability to access abundant renewable options.

Environmental regulatory reform should focus on reducing administrative requirements, the economic burden of regulatory compliance, and should address conflicting compliance requirements between state and federal regulatory bodies.

FORT LEONARD WOOD

Fort Leonard Wood plays a critical role in the training and development of military personnel and has a significant economic impact on the State of Missouri.

The Chamber encourages policies to expand the base while protecting it from funding and personnel reductions.

The Chamber supports the efforts of Ozarks Technical Community College, Missouri State University and Drury University to expand training programs offered at Fort Leonard Wood.

HEALTHCARE REFORM

The Chamber supports reduced federal mandates and the passage of professional liability and tort reform legislation that will lower the cost of patient care.

The Chamber opposes placing an undue or uncertain amount of the cost of care on business and opposes health insurance mandates that undermine the ability of employers to provide competitive health insurance at an affordable cost.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The Chamber supports improved immigration policies that will help meet the needs of business, including worker shortages that impair economic growth.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED IMMIGRATION

The Chamber supports comprehensive immigration reform and a talent-oriented immigration policy that establishes an accurate employment eligibility confirmation system that provides a good faith “safe harbor” to employers, includes an efficient guest worker program, expands H-1B and H-2B visa issuance and employment-based green cards, addresses undocumented workers filling legitimate employment needs, and strengthens national security.

CONRAD J1 VISA WAIVER

The Chamber supports the ability to address the healthcare worker shortage by removing unnecessary barriers that prevent providers from working in the United States, including the reauthorization of the Conrad J1 Visa Waiver to allow states to increase the number of physician waivers per fiscal year.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Chamber supports funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services Hiring Program (COPS Hiring Program) and the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) to assist the Springfield Fire Department, the Springfield Police Department and surrounding departments in meeting critical staffing, equipment and resource needs.

REGULATORY REFORM

Efforts to ease statutory and regulatory burdens are needed to streamline processes and promote business efficiency.

The Chamber supports revising the regulatory process to require Congress to vote on new rules and regulations before they can take effect, raising the regulators’ burden

of proof in court, and requiring independent review of major rules to verify necessity and potential for effective implementation.

TAXATION

Fiscal responsibility is critical to ensuring a stable and sustainable economy, as well as safeguarding the long-term financial well-being of our nation.

INTERNET SALES TAX

The Chamber supports policies that level the playing field for all retailers and provide much-needed revenue to states.

TAX REFORM

Any proposed tax reform should increase certainty to the business community, encourage capital investment, simplify the tax code and be fiscally responsible.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Chamber supports continued and predictable long-term funding for critical transportation and infrastructure projects.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Chamber encourages continued support of partnerships between local, state, and federal entities that will maximize available dollars through collaborative efforts. The Chamber supports streamlining and reforming the permitting process for federal infrastructure projects.

BROADBAND

The Chamber supports funding for broadband investments.

MULTIMODAL

The Chamber supports operating assistance for the Springfield area’s transit systems, including investment in multimodal infrastructure, bus replacement and rail lines.

SPRINGFIELD-BRANSON NATIONAL AIRPORT

The Chamber supports increased funding for airports, including the FAA Passenger Facility Charge, to maintain airfield infrastructure and encourage growth in airline passengers, air cargo, general aviation, and flight training.



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