



# The Minnesota Chamber Federation:

Local chambers speaking with one voice: 2024 legislative priorities

Local chambers represent economic vitality in their communities. The Minnesota Chamber Federation unites and amplifies the voice of local chambers by advocating for policies to advance business in every corner of the state. The Federation comprises 58 chambers representing more than 80 communities and more than 22,000 businesses. They have worked to promote pro-growth policies to the Legislature for more than a decade, helping ensure that state lawmakers understand the needs and interests of Minnesota's diverse and successful local business community. Minnesotans pride themselves on an exceptional state in

## Costs matter

While states across the country are permanently cutting taxes, reducing regulatory burdens and addressing affordability for businesses, Minnesota is becoming a cost outlier with the enactment of numerous anti-employer policies that are driving up costs.

The 2023 Legislative Session brought costly and complicated mandates, tax increases and more regulations. Unsustainable state spending increases of more than 35% have now put Minnesota at risk for a budget deficit putting even greater strain on the private sector and the state economy. Costs matter – for employers and their employees.

We must hold the line on additional tax and fee increases on businesses and prevent new, onerous proposals making Minnesota a competitive outlier such as new antitrust regulations undermining free market competition and innovation. Policymakers should focus in

this non-budget session on reducing regulations creating barriers to private sector growth including reforms in permitting, housing and childcare.

## Environmental permitting reform

Businesses seek expansions outside of Minnesota due to the state's arduous permitting process, and those that do invest here are often faced with greater uncertainty and lengthier timelines than what may be experienced in other states. Site selectors have pegged Minnesota as unfriendly on the criteria of environmental permitting, taking it off the list for potential investment.

The Minnesota Chamber Foundation, the nonpartisan research arm of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, is conducting an in-depth, objective analysis of Minnesota's environmental permitting system and will be releasing recommendations for reform.

The Federation will proactively advocate for reforms to Minnesota's permitting process. Minnesota's environmental permitting process can both protect the state's cherished natural resources and produce timely and reliable outcomes for businesses; achieving this goal is one important step to help Minnesota compete in the 21st century economy.

## Workplace mandates: Educate, modify and defend

Several onerous workplace mandates passed last session. The sick and safe time requirement becomes effective January 1, 2024. The Paid Family and Medical Leave Act goes into effect January 2026. Many, many businesses across the state are unprepared for these mandates.

The Federation plays an important role in educating their members on the mandates and compliance.

In addition, we will look to Federation partners to help mitigate the impacts of workplace mandates through the rulemaking process, especially the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act.

Finally, we will defend against further workplace mandates that harm the employer/employee relationship and make it more difficult, and expensive, to operate a business in Minnesota.

## Provide local and regional leadership for Minnesota Matters

Minnesota Matters will work to inform voters about changes in Minnesota election laws that allow for early and absentee voting; make voters aware of key election dates; encourage employers and employees to attend their local precinct caucuses; and engage in what promises to be an important election in our state. This is a non-partisan, non-political effort and Federation partners can assist in elevating the effort statewide.

## 2024 Minnesota Chamber Federation

Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce  
Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce  
Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce  
Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Austin Area Chamber of Commerce  
Bemidji Area Chamber of Commerce  
Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce  
Burnsville Chamber of Commerce  
Cloquet Area Chamber of Commerce  
Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce  
Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce  
Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce  
Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce  
Elk River Area Chamber of Commerce  
Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce.  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce  
Faribault Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism  
Fergus Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
Glenwood Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce  
Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce  
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Mankato Growth  
Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce  
Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau  
Hermantown Area Chamber of Commerce  
Hibbing Area Chamber of Commerce  
Hutchinson Area Chamber of Commerce  
International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

Lake County Chamber of Commerce  
Lakeville Area Chamber of Commerce and CVB  
Laurentian Chamber of Commerce  
Litchfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Lonsdale Chamber of Commerce  
Marshall Area Chamber of Commerce  
MetroNorth Chamber of Commerce  
New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce  
Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism  
Pipestone Area Chamber of Commerce  
Red Wing Chamber of Commerce  
Redwood Falls Area Chamber of Commerce  
River Heights Chamber of Commerce  
Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce  
Sauk Centre Area Chamber of Commerce  
Shakopee Chamber of Commerce  
Southwest Metro Chamber of Commerce  
St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce  
St. Paul Area Chamber  
Thief River Falls Chamber of Commerce  
Twin Cities North Chamber of Commerce  
Waconia Chamber of Commerce  
Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce  
White Bear Area Chamber of Commerce  
Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce  
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce  
Woodbury Area Chamber of Commerce  
Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce