

Process, Principles and FAQs

Policy Forum Process and Rules

Policy Position Adoption Process

Instead of adopting an entirely new slate of positions each year during the Policy Forum, all current policy positions of the Alaska Chamber remain until updated, reconsidered, or they will sunset. All positions will automatically sunset three years after they are adopted.

Quorum

A quorum will be established at the beginning of the Policy Forum. For a position to be adopted during the Policy Forum, a majority of members constituting the quorum must vote in favor of adoption.

Position Selection

The Alaska Chamber bylaws place the responsibility to manage all affairs of the corporation with the Board of Directors. There is no provision in the bylaws for member selection of position priorities. For this reason, priorities are selected by the Board.

Single Capital Position

The Alaska Chamber returned to its founding principles and does not consider positions on specific capital projects. Instead, the general membership adopted a generic capital position that states, "The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce supports state capital projects that facilitate resource and economic development in a cost-effective manner." Supporting some projects over others without due diligence jeopardizes the Chamber's credibility in Juneau diminishing advocacy success on the many issues upon which Alaska Chamber members are firmly united. Local chambers are best positioned to advocate for regional projects. Not taking positions on capital projects is consistent with the Alaska Chamber's long-standing principles of "state unity", "statewide action" and "local controversies" adopted in 1960.

Alaska Chamber Principles

State Unity

Unity of purpose and unity of performance can best advance the objectives for which the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce was formed. The Alaska Chamber pledges to work for State unity by promoting a better understanding of Alaska's problems, by clarifying regional misunderstanding, by bringing to the business and professional leaders a statewide viewpoint of their problems, and thus, provides an agency for united action.

Statewide Action

Except in cases of emergency - to be determined by the Board of Directors - the Alaska Chamber shall act on matters of statewide importance only after all regions of the State have had an opportunity for expression, either through appropriate committee action of the Board

of Directors and after principal interests have been provided an opportunity to present their facts and views for the Board of Director's consideration and action.

Local Controversies

The Alaska Chamber was formed to study and act upon matters of statewide importance and shall abstain from becoming involved in controversies between localities unless in the judgment of the Board of Directors, such mediation gives promise of constructive benefits to the State as a whole.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the desired outcome of the Policy Forum?

To add relevant positions to the Chamber's advocacy platform and make necessary revisions to current positions.

Who can participate in the Policy Forum?

All designated representatives of Alaska Chamber Business Members. Dues must be current as of October 1st.

Who runs the Policy Forum?

The introduction, discussion and voting on positions will be moderated by the Legislative Affairs Chairman and/or Vice Chairman with assistance from the Alaska Chamber President and CEO.

What happens to all current positions?

Current positions are reviewed by the Legislative Affairs Committee (LAC) and all adopted positions automatically roll forward or sunset if they are not updated or resubmitted after the three-year sunset period. Members need not vote on these positions again during the 2022 Policy Forum.

What if a current policy position has been resolved or needs to be updated?

The LAC reviews all current positions and requests for revisions. Positions that are complete, resolved, or no longer require action can either remain positions or be removed. The LAC makes recommendations to the Board of Directors to revise or remove positions.

What is the role of the Legislative Affairs Committee in new submissions?

The LAC has the responsibility to review each proposed new position and provide a written recommendation to either adopt a position or not. The LAC may also take no position prior to the Policy Forum. A majority vote by the Board to adopt means the Chamber will advocate in favor of the position. Failure to adopt means the Chamber remains neutral on the position.

What is the role of a position sponsor?

Position sponsors should plan to attend the Policy Forum and be prepared to provide a brief presentation of the position, and answer member questions prior to members voting on the adoption of a position. A position advocate may be named by the position sponsor to represent the position during the Policy Forum. All position sponsors and advocates must be Alaska Chamber Business Members.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Cont.
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How long will positions be discussed?

Position presentation and discussion must be limited considering the sheer volume of positions needing attention, the work done in advance by the sponsor and the LAC, and the limited time available.

How is voting conducted at the Policy Forum?

Only one representative per Alaska Chamber General Member and Local Chambers in good standing may vote.

What are the member definitions according to the Alaska Chamber Bylaws?*Article III, Section 1 – Classes of Members*

The Board of Directors may, from time to time, establish membership, the terms, classifications, and voting rights thereof. Until such further determination, there shall be three classifications of membership, as prescribed in these bylaws:

- i) General Members – Companies, individuals in business, and trade organizations (representing for-profit companies) with a valid State of Alaska business license who meet qualifications set for such membership as established by the Board, and who pay dues as prescribed by the Board, may become general members. Non-profits with more than 100 employees may request an exception to be approved as a general member with voting rights. The board must vote to allow for general member exceptions on a case-by-case basis.
- ii) Associate Members – Individuals, non-profit groups, government employees, public and non-government organizations who subscribe to the aims of the Alaska Chamber, who meet qualifications set for such membership as established by the board, and who pay dues as prescribed by the board, may become associate members.
- iii) Other Members – Honorary members, local chambers, and subsidiary structures that subscribe to the aims of the Alaska Chamber, who pay such dues as negotiated, or are granted membership by the Board.

What if the Board decides a position needs to be reconsidered?

The sponsor will be contacted and then will need to decide whether or not to advance the position for reconsideration. If the sponsor resubmits the position, the original submission may be used, or an updated submission may be advanced.

Who selects the Chamber's position priorities?

The Board selects the Chamber's top state and federal priorities for the year. Members are encouraged to communicate with Board members directly and actively participate in the Policy Forum and other Chamber committees, activities, and events.