



# LEGISLATIVE 2021 PRIORITIES

City of Springfield • City Utilities of Springfield • Greene County  
Libraries & Arts Council Alliance • Missouri State University  
Ozarks Technical Community College • Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau • Springfield Public Schools  
Springfield Regional Economic Partnership

# Springfield Metro Partnership 2021 Legislative Priorities

## 1) Fiscal Responsibility

Maintaining a balanced state budget without placing undue tax burden on citizens or reducing the effectiveness of essential state programs is key to Missouri's success.

The Partnership supports legislation to create a mechanism to collect existing sales tax for online transactions, without an accompanying tax cut. Additionally, the Partnership encourages lawmakers to refrain from further broad-based tax cut measures until current reforms have been fully implemented and the state budget has stabilized.

## 2) Investment in Education and Workforce Development

The Partnership encourages investment in all levels of education, including full funding of the foundation formula and equitable funding for public universities and community colleges.

Missouri's prosperity in the global economy is directly linked to our ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce. The Partnership encourages increased investment in Missouri One Start, the state's workforce development system, and in the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant, to help meet employers' current and future needs.

## 3) Transportation & Infrastructure

Transportation and infrastructure are critical to the economic success of our region and to the state. The Partnership encourages lawmakers to continue to find alternative sources of funding for transportation infrastructure to ensure continued investment in the statewide system. The Partnership also supports the expansion of broadband throughout the state.

## 4) COVID-19 Liability Protections

The Partnership supports safe harbor liability protections for businesses and organizations that have followed government health and safety guidelines during COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.



# Springfield Metro Partnership Legislative Guiding Principles

## Economic Development

The Springfield Metro Partnership supports proven tax credit programs that are used to stimulate employment and leverage private investment. We oppose efforts to reduce the effectiveness of programs that significantly impact job creation and result in a positive return on investment for the state.

## Environment

The Partnership encourages environmental standards that provide a balance between protecting our area's natural resources and ensuring regional economic growth. We support innovative strategies for meeting environmental mandates that require community affordability to be addressed within the evaluation process.

# Elementary and Secondary Education

Quality education at all levels is a critical component to the health of the region. We support full funding of the state's K-12 foundation and transportation formulas.

Expecting academic rigor and accountability of our schools is key to providing students the skills necessary to compete in a global workforce. The Partnership supports the implementation of high and rigorous standards that develop the full potential of every child and opposes legislation that erodes the authority of local school boards or diverts resources from public schools to non-public schools.

The Partnership also supports investing in early childhood education, libraries and continuing education opportunities based on the public return on investment.

## Libraries and the Arts

The Partnership supports the role of the arts, libraries, and cultural organizations as contributing to the economic health, educational growth and tourism of our region. We support funding from the Non-Resident Professional Athletes and Entertainers Tax and the distribution of those funds as intended, including allocation to the Missouri Cultural Trust. Because of the impact libraries have on Missourians at all stages of life, we support the restoration of state aid to libraries and REAL (Remote Electronic Access for Libraries) monies to FY 2015 levels. The Partnership supports distribution of funds to the cultural partners, as proposed and approved, without budgetary constraints or withholdings.



## Local Authority

There are narrow circumstances, such as a statewide crisis, in which a governor needs the ability to override local regulations. Beyond those circumstances, the Partnership opposes limiting local authority. State-mandated solutions and preemption of local laws limit the flexibility of local government. An alternative to preemption is for the State of Missouri to forge alliances with local government.

## Higher Education

The Partnership encourages the General Assembly to eliminate the core funding disparities that result in Springfield-area higher education institutions receiving less funding per student than other institutions throughout the state. The Partnership supports funding public higher education institutions at the highest possible levels because of the positive impact they have on all facets of life in Missouri, including economic and workforce development.

The Partnership supports funding for Ozarks Technical Community College for the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and capital priorities at Missouri State University. Funding these projects would help align higher education funding with the state's workforce priorities, while meeting the needs of employers.



## Local Funding

To ensure public safety and efficient access to justice, the Partnership supports increased funding for Greene County's criminal justice system including the 31st Judicial Circuit courts and facilities, the statutorily set jail per diem, juvenile staff salaries and per diem, public defender services and prosecutor offices.

The Partnership supports the continued collection of sales tax on out-of-state vehicles because of the impact the loss of revenue would have on local budgets.

## Travel Industry

The Partnership supports enabling legislation that would allow Springfield voters to increase the City's authority to collect hotel-motel or convention taxes for capital investments to increase overnight travel and tourism.

Growth in the travel industry is vital to the state's economy because it creates jobs and generates revenue. Investing in tourism marketing has a high return on investment. The Partnership encourages legislators to fully fund the Division of Tourism's budget according to current or future legislation.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

We encourage legislators to partner and collaborate with local leaders, public officials, citizen groups and other stakeholders to ensure Missourians are aware of the significant transportation funding shortfalls.

We support efforts to accelerate the construction of projects when local communities are willing to assist with the financing of transportation improvements.

The Partnership supports restored funding for Springfield's public transit system, including compensation for the loss of state funds to help address the significant increase in costs to operate the transit system.

The Partnership opposes the transfer of state-owned roadways to local ownership and maintenance.

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