

FEDERAL

2022

AGENDA



Springfield
Area Chamber of Commerce

www.springfieldchamber.com

2022 Legislative Priorities

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, located in Missouri's third largest city, represents more than 1,500 members including business, professional and community organizations.

The Chamber's public policy efforts are member and volunteer driven and are focused on improving the business climate and to grow jobs, develop the workforce and drive investment in the state.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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.

Agribusiness

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

COVID-19 Response and Recovery

The Chamber supports the continuation of efforts initiated in response to the coronavirus pandemic to ease applicable statutory and regulatory burdens to streamline processes and promote business efficiency.

The Chamber supports continued federal funding for adequate COVID-19 testing and contact tracing as well as support for the distribution of approved vaccines. The Chamber supports an employer's right to make decisions related to Covid-19 vaccine requirements without intervention by the federal government.

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 the Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center (JVIC) and the Missouri State University efactory, to support private sector-led research and development and job creation.

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.

BUSINESS CLIMATE

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 and a reduced national debt.

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.

EDUCATION

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.

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

The Chamber supports federal funding for Ozarks Technical Community College's Airframe and Powerplant Training program as well as allied health programs, and for STEM facilities and related programs at Missouri State University.

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

The Chamber supports Fort Leonard Wood and the critical role it provides in the training and development of military personnel and for the economic development impact it has on the state. 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.

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.

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 and the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services Hiring Program (COPS Hiring Program) to assist the Springfield Fire Department, the Springfield Police Department and surrounding departments in meeting critical staffing, equipment and resource needs.

REGULATORY REFORM

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

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.

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.

The Chamber supports funding for broadband improvements.

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 advocates for 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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