

FEDERAL

2018

AGENDA



Springfield
Area Chamber of Commerce

www.springfieldchamber.com



2018 Legislative Priorities

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, located in Missouri's third largest city, represents over 1,500 business and professional organizations. With a focus on economic development and advocacy, the Chamber's goals are to assist existing businesses, create new jobs and improve our region's quality of life. The Chamber believes economic growth is critical to our nation's fiscal health, and public policy must be focused on removing the threat of fiscal instability, improving certainty, and creating a sustainable foundation for economic and job growth in the years ahead.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is critical that Missouri remain competitive in domestic and international markets. The Chamber encourages lawmakers to maintain the balance of economic success and quality of life that distinguishes our state and nation.

Agribusiness

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

Entrepreneurial Support

The Chamber supports programs that incentivize capital investment, small business assistance and access to early stage capital and support. Additionally, the Chamber advocates for continued support for the Missouri State University eFactory.

International Trade

The Chamber supports international trade policies that encourage economic development, reduce trade barriers, protect U.S. intellectual property, eliminate unfair trade practices, encourage efficient international trade assistance programs and focus on tangible national security issues while safeguarding America's longstanding "open door" policy on international investment.

The Chamber supports the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the negotiation of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement, Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center

The Chamber supports federal research funding for the Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center (JVIC) for the potential to encourage private sector-led research and development and the creation of high-tech jobs.

BUSINESS CLIMATE ISSUES

Labor Relations

The Chamber supports the right of workers to voluntarily join unions under fair and democratic rules but opposes legislation,

such as the Employee Free Choice Act, that would impose new and costly regulations on businesses, disrupt the way businesses are run, and stifle productivity and economic growth.

The Chamber opposes onerous rulemaking by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), including prior decisions on ambush elections, enhanced joint-employer liability and decisions related to the employee handbook.

Minimum Wage

The Chamber opposes an increase of the minimum wage.

Prevailing Wage

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

Classification of Employees

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

EDUCATION

The Chamber supports continued investment in all levels of public education and workforce training. The Chamber supports modifying Pell Grants to allow funding for regionally accredited public two-year colleges to offer short-term workforce training.

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. Solutions should be comprehensive and long-term, and ensure the availability of affordable, abundant, and reliable energy. Proposed environmental or energy policy must consider all forms of available energy and balance environmental and health concerns with the needs of industry and business.

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.

Emissions Mandates

The Chamber opposes carbon reduction policies that place Missouri at an economic disadvantage. The Chamber supports the availability of all energy options in order to maximize U.S. energy independence, ensure grid reliability, and control costs. Domestic emissions mandates should not be implemented until an agreed-upon global accord exists that would commit all major emitting nations to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Water Quality and Quantity

The Chamber supports economically feasible efforts by local, state, and federal government to protect, preserve and improve water quality and quantity through sound watershed management, including conservation measures, the application of reasonable standards and educational resources.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY & GOVERNANCE

The Chamber supports a balanced federal budget and a reduced national debt.

Banking and Financial Regulatory Reform

The Chamber encourages legislators to modify recently passed laws and regulations to improve access to capital, reduce regulatory burdens on community banks and to eliminate those elements that are unreasonably restrictive.

Unfunded Mandates

The Chamber opposes unfunded and underfunded federal legislative mandates.

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 protect the base from funding and personnel reductions.

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.

Due to the costs and administrative burdens created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) the Chamber encourages government officials to address the problems resulting from its implementation.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

All policy enacted on immigration reform should happen at the federal level. We support comprehensive immigration reform and encourage the federal government to adopt a talent-oriented immigration policy.

The Chamber supports legislation that establishes an accurate employment eligibility confirmation system that provides a good faith "safe harbor" to employers, includes an efficient guest worker program, provides for expansion of H-1B and H-2B visa issuance and employment-based green cards, addresses the undocumented workers who are filling legitimate employment needs, and strengthens our national security through thorough screening and disincentives for illegal immigration.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Chamber supports funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and funding for 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 POLICY

E-Fairness Tax Policy

The Chamber supports policies, such as the Marketplace Fairness Act, that level the playing field for all retailers and provide much-needed revenue to states.

Tax Reform

The Chamber supports legislation that increases certainty to the business community and encourages business development. The Chamber supports tax reform that simplifies the tax code, reduces the cost of IRS compliance, and encourages increased capital investment and job creation while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

The Chamber supports legislation that would streamline individual state taxation requirements with greater consistency and reduced administrative costs.

TRANSPORTATION

The Chamber encourages continued support of partnerships between local, state, and federal entities that will maximize available dollars through collaborative efforts.

The Chamber supports long-term sustainable funding for transportation in order to strengthen the United States Highway Trust Fund program and ensure funding is available for the country's critical transportation infrastructure projects.

Multimodal

The Chamber supports federal operating assistance for the Springfield area's transit systems including efforts to secure capital funds for bus replacement and multimodal infrastructure.

The Chamber supports legislation that encourages investment in infrastructure for new rail lines that would help ease congestion on the nation's highway system.

Springfield-Branson National Airport

The Chamber advocates for an increase in the FAA Passenger Facility Charge and supports a multi-year Federal Aviation Authorization Bill to avoid the disruption of continued short-term extensions and ensure needed airport improvements are made.

U.S. POST OFFICE RESTRUCTURING

The Chamber opposes the elimination of the existing post offices or processing and distribution center in Springfield.



For more information, please contact:

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