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FEDERAL 2019 AGENDA



Springfield
Area Chamber of Commerce

www.springfieldchamber.com

2019 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

A strong business climate is critical to the economic success of Missouri and the United States. Business growth supports infrastructure, encourages education and 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.

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.

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 also supports the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

BUSINESS CLIMATE

Labor Relations

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

The Chamber opposes an increase of the minimum wage.

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-subsidized 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.

Unfunded Mandates

The Chamber opposes unfunded and underfunded federal legislative mandates.

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.

The Chamber supports federal funding for facility construction, program development, and implementation of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Technology at Ozarks Technical Community College.

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.

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 Ozarks Technical Community College's request to offer training programs 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.

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

We support 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 reauthorization of the Conrad J1 Visa Waiver to extend the program to 2021 and to allow states to allocate 35 physician waivers per fiscal year.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Chamber supports funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program to assist the Springfield Fire 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

E-Fairness Tax Policy

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

The Chamber supports long term sustainable funding for critical transportation infrastructure projects.

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

Multimodal

The Chamber supports federal operating assistance for the Springfield area's transit systems including capital funds for bus replacement and multimodal infrastructure, and investment in new rail lines to ease congestion on the nation's highway system.

Springfield-Branson National Airport

The Chamber advocates for increased funding for airports, including the FAA Passenger Facility Charge, to maintain airfield infrastructure and keep up with strong growth in airline passengers, air cargo, general aviation, and flight training.