

2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

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Regional Chamber

ROADMAP FOR ADVOCACY

The Springfield Regional Chamber's Legislative Agenda 2021 will guide our advocacy work to best represent the issues of critical importance to our members and our business community. This work will support job creation, catalyze economic development, bolster our economic health, capitalize on the diversity of our workforce and our industries, protect the competitiveness of our region and the Commonwealth as a whole and build a more prosperous future.

BUDGET & TAX POLICY

FEDERAL STIMULUS

Advocate for the inclusion of fair and equitable stimulus funding to support our region's cities and towns to supplement budgetary shortfalls resulting from the pandemic.

STATE BUDGET

Support fiscally sound legislation and policy which rebuilds the Stabilization Fund, develops new revenue through sports wagering, identifies opportunities for revenue-enhancing measures, while opposing new broad-based taxes which would hinder the region's economic recovery.

TAXATION

Monitor all proposed changes to tax policy and advocate for those that would enhance the region's competitiveness, promote job creation and catalyze economic development.

LOCAL AID

Advocate for fair and equitable funding for local aid.

FAIR SHARE AMENDMENT

Oppose the proposal to amend the Massachusetts Constitution to add a surcharge on income over \$1 million as it would significantly thwart the competitiveness of the region and the Commonwealth, irreparably harm small businesses and sets a bad precedent for tax-making policy through Constitutional amendment.

HEALTHCARE

HEALTH EQUITY

Support legislation and policies which work to close the racial, ethnic and socio-economic health disparities in our region.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Support the concepts of healthcare reform including: access to care, telehealth and the nurse licensing compact; pharmaceutical transparency, and health care cost control measures for all, and monitor all legislative proposals that may run counter to these concepts.

MANDATED BENEFITS

Continue to review areas for cost containment and oppose mandated and/or expanded benefits that are not evidence based and whose costs exceed their value.

PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENTS

Advocate for appropriate commercial Medicare, Medicaid and Disproportionate Services Hospital payments so as not to penalize our regional health care providers or drive up costs to the commercial markets.

FEDERAL AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

Continue to follow legislative, regulatory and fiscal changes to the Act, as well as other proposals, and advocate at the state and/or federal level in order to avoid negative impacts to the healthcare system in Massachusetts.

LEGISLATIVE PARTNERS



Baystate
Health



COMCAST



Mercy Medical Center
Trinity Health



Health New England

EVERSOURCE

MGM Springfield

The Republican

WWLP - 22 News

BusinessWest

WORKPLACE & WORKFORCE

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Monitor pandemic-related legislation and advocate as appropriate to support our business community and ensure fair and equitable access to resources.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Continue to advocate for a freeze in the unemployment insurance rates so as not to over burden the employer community and encourage reforms to modernize the system.

PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Monitor this issue and advocate as appropriate to ensure reasonable implementation for the business community.

WORKFORCE TALENT

Support legislation and policy recommendations that promote inclusive skills development including career-technical initiatives and the expansion of apprenticeship programs and those which support innovative and labor-market aligned educational models such as dual enrollment and early college and those which target first generation college students and communities of color.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Advocate for legislation and policies which support and strengthen our regional economy, workforce, communities, and future with affordable, universally-accessible, stable, high-quality early childhood education for all families in our region.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Encourage reforms to better reflect the current economy, encourage entrepreneurialism and incent business growth while promoting regional equity.

ENERGY, INFRASTRUCTURE & THE ENVIRONMENT

ENERGY

Advocate for a comprehensive energy strategy which maintains sufficient and equitable capacity and affordability for continued growth of the region's business community, including maintaining a balanced energy portfolio, development of alternative renewable energy sources, ensuring a safe, reliable and adequate supply of natural gas, and continued conservation and energy efficiency measures.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Support legislation and policies that provide fair, equitable and responsible investments in the maintenance and development of infrastructure, such as energy, road and rail, real estate and housing, telecommunications and broadband, that preserve and strengthen the regional economy and its communities and catalyze economic development, with a focus on the unique challenges of the region's Gateway Cities.

ENVIRONMENT

Support responsible policies to protect our environment without adding unreasonable or inequitable cost burdens on the region's business community. Environmental protection and a sound business environment do not need to be mutually exclusive, with both resulting in new technological advances, manufacturing opportunities, job creation and efficiency, all the while preserving and protecting the environment.

STEERING COMMITTEE

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