

A photograph of the Springfield skyline at dusk. The image features several prominent buildings, including a tall glass skyscraper on the left and a historic clock tower on the right. In the foreground, there are lush green trees and a body of water reflecting the city lights. The sky is a mix of blue and orange hues from the setting or rising sun.

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Regional Chamber

2023

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

The Springfield Regional Chamber's Legislative Agenda will guide our advocacy work to best represent the issues of critical importance to our members and our business community.

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. Advocate for an increase in the exemption and the removal of the clawback provision on the estate tax.

LOCAL AID Advocate for fair and equitable funding for local aid.

FAIR SHARE AMENDMENT Advocate for clarity and fairness in the assessment of this new tax and advocate for all new revenues collected to be allocated to the identified priorities of transportation and education.

WORKPLACE & WORKFORCE

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE Continue to advocate for a modernization of the state's UI system and monitor changes that would increase costs for employers.

PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE Monitor and advocate as appropriate to ensure reasonable implementation for the business community as proposed changes are made.

WORKFORCE TALENT Support legislation and policy recommendations that promote inclusive skills development including career-technical initiatives and the expansion of apprenticeship programs. Support and advocate for the creation of job pathways and diverse and inclusive workforce pipelines for fields where there are projected major skills gaps including healthcare (CNA's, home health aides), manufacturing (skilled labor), human services and the trades.

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, promote entrepreneurialism and incentivize 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 renewal energy sources, ensuring a safe, reliable and adequate supply of natural gas, 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.

HEALTHCARE

HEALTH EQUITY Support legislation and policies which address racial, ethnic, socio-economic, sexual orientation, and gender identity disparities in our region, with a consistent regulatory structure to collect data.

HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE Reduce administrative burdens by developing reasonable and timely licensing and credentialing procedures, including interstate licensing compacts. Support telehealth services which increase access to appropriate care.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH Recognizing the growing need for behavioral health services, the Chamber will support evidence-based legislation and policies that expand access to these services.

HEALTH CARE COSTS Support legislation and policies that help ensure transparency, contain costs, 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, and Medicaid payments so as not to penalize our regional health care providers or drive-up commercial insurance costs.

FEDERAL AND STATE OVERSIGHT Monitor legislative, regulatory, and fiscal changes to the health care system, and advocate at the state and federal level in order to avoid negative impacts to the health care system in our region.

Learn more
springfieldregionalchamber.com

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