

# LEAWOOD CHAMBER 2017 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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*The Leawood Chamber encourages fiscal responsibility in a manner that will enhance the long term financial health of our State. In general, policies should help control or reduce the cost of doing business in Kansas, while maintaining an environment of legislative stability and predictability. Our members expect the governmental institutions with which they interface to be responsive to their needs.*

## **Promote Fair Competition and Limited Government Regulation in the Marketplace**

Government should at every opportunity enact legislation that promotes fair competition and stimulates investment as well as create an atmosphere of limited regulation and a climate of regulatory predictability.

## **Competitive Business and Tax Climate in Kansas**

The Chamber encourages an environment of legislative stability and predictability allowing businesses to effectively plan for future growth and expansion. We support a balanced tax policy that acknowledges the economic realities of the unique competitive environment in which our member businesses operate, including maintaining the sales tax exclusion for professional services. We support measures that support this goal, including:

- Preserving key sales tax exemptions impacting business.
- Currently the cost of uninsured Kansans is borne by Kansas businesses, including hospitals and health systems, and all of our state's citizens. The Chamber remains committed to ensuring businesses and their employees have reasonable access to affordable healthcare, and we support a Kansas-based solution that would help those working Kansans who cannot currently afford healthcare coverage.
- Continue monitoring the administration of the Employment Security Trust to ensure that the implementation of the revised employer rate structure provides Fund solvency and fairly assesses Kansas employers based on their utilization of the system.

*(Continuing Competitive Business and Tax Climate in Kansas)*

- Maintaining the integrity and affordability of the workers compensation system, while reducing the administrative compliance burden of the existing system.
- Protecting market-driven employer/employee relationships and opposing mandates.
- The Chamber supports policies that do not simply transfer the tax burden from one level of government to another.
- The Chamber supports nonpartisan and nonelection process for the selection of high quality judges.

## **Support Economic and Job Creation Efforts**

The Chamber supports economic development incentives and programs that will help grow the Kansas economy. Those incentives and programs should not only attract and assist businesses eager to move to Kansas but also help those Kansas businesses looking to grow and expand within our State. The Leawood Chamber strongly encourages and supports collaboration among statewide organizations and educational institutions to create a comprehensive and coordinated statewide plan to facilitate and enhance economic development and job growth. Basic tenets of the plan should include:

- Maintaining diverse, flexible, predictable, and competitive state and local economic development tools that can address a variety of job and investment opportunities.
- Assuring that currently authorized economic development programs are properly funded and marketed.
- Initiatives that promote more effective workplace development. We encourage the Legislature to minimize the adverse effects of any legislative changes to existing economic development programs.

## **Excellence in Public Education**

The Leawood Chamber supports a quality public education system and recognizes it is an integral part of economic development in Leawood and for our member businesses located throughout the region. This includes:

- Developing a new school finance formula that maximizes resources and expand local funding flexibility and control over how education funds are raised and spent. This formula should provide adequate funding to provide substantially the same opportunity for all Kansas students to achieve well-defined educational outcomes.

*(Continuing Excellence in Public Education)*

- Preserving competitive investment in public higher education to preserve affordability and produce a well-trained workforce.
- Policies, programs, and adequate funding that encourage the development of a robust public education system that emphasizes college and career readiness highlighting a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculum that fosters a well-trained, productive, globally competitive workforce.

## **Transportation**

The Leawood Chamber supports preservation of direct revenue transfers to the State Highway Fund (SHF) and opposes the diversion of dedicated SHF monies for any use other than the funding of the eligible transportation projects for which it was created, while maintaining flexibility, accountability, and opportunities for local input and support.

## **Support the Preservation of Local Control**

The cornerstone of municipal government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports local control whereby local elected officials are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

## **Oppose Tax or Spending Lids on State/Local Governments**

To ensure our elected representatives' ability to govern effectively, the Council opposes the imposition of constitutional or statutory state or local tax/spending lids, "supermajority" approval requirements, or unreasonably burdensome mandates in reporting and approving tax or budget measures.

## **Oppose Initiative & Referendum**

The Chamber opposes initiative and referendum provisions in Kansas, which would allow a relatively small number of petitioners to force costly public elections on state or local issues.

## **Immigration**

The Leawood Chamber supports a balanced immigration policy, created and enforced at the federal level. We oppose State action that creates additional costly or time-consuming mandates for employers who have made reasonable efforts to assure that the workers they hire are eligible to work in our country.

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