

LEAWOOD CHAMBER 2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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.

Facilitate Pandemic Relief and Recovery

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber supports development of policies that help businesses stay open, pay employees, avoid additional layoffs, and assist with the recovery of the state's economy including:

- Working with elected officials to access stimulus incentives
- Facilitating adequate capital
- Providing tax forgiveness
- Extending business liability protections
- Replenishing the Kansas Employment Security Trust Fund
- Reducing regulations
- Support for the extraordinary needs of education, students, and childcare providers during the pandemic and through recovery
- Expanding access to broadband

Promote Fair Competition and Limited Government Regulation in the Marketplace

Government should at every opportunity enact legislation as needed 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 reasonable and balanced tax policy that acknowledges the economic realities of the unique bistate environment in which our member businesses operate, including maintaining the sales tax exclusion for professional services and other sales tax exemptions critical to maintaining business competitiveness. We support measures that help achieve this goal, including:

- Preserving key sales tax exemptions impacting business.
- Monitoring the administration of the Kansas Employment Security Trust Fund to assure there are no overpayments or unqualified benefits paid, apply neutral and fair interpretation of the unemployment insurance laws, and ensure the employer rate structure provides Fund solvency and fair assessments on Kansas employers based on their utilization of the system;
- 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.
- Reinstating, for non-corporate business taxpayers, the income tax expensing deduction for capital investments, back in parity with corporate taxpayers

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- Decoupling certain state income tax provisions from federal provisions, including the option to take itemized deductions.
- The Chamber supports a nonpartisan and nonelection process that facilitates 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 supports measures to strengthen the Department of Commerce and enhance the State's ability to compete in the global economy for job growth, including the following priorities:

- Maintaining effective state and local economic development tools that can address a variety of job and investment opportunities. These tools should include metrics that can be used to measure the success of these tools.
- Ensuring that currently authorized economic development programs are properly funded and marketed.
- Promoting initiatives that produce more effective workforce development.

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:

- Maintaining stable and adequate K-12 education funding that:
 - o Enables students to achieve post-secondary success and work-force readiness in a globally competitive economy, including removing barriers for career and workforce training exploration.
 - o Does not unreasonably burden Kansas businesses or adversely affect other core State services or the economic development climate.
 - o Maximizes local funding flexibility and control.
- Preserving competitive investment in post-secondary education, including technology training and certifications, to improve affordability and produce a well-trained workforce.

Support Access to Quality Healthcare

The Chamber recognizes that the healthcare industry is a major economic driver in the State of Kansas, creating substantial amounts of wages and capital investment in our State's economy. We support healthcare initiatives that ensure sufficient funding for providers and greater access to quality care for community members, including mental health services.

Providers continue to face sustained increases in expenses resulting from uninsured and underinsured individuals, limiting innovation, and threatening future investments. The Chamber supports Kansas solutions that improve the quality and efficiency of the current Medicaid system while expanding coverage to those eligible under federal law and associated regulations.

Investment in Transportation Infrastructure

The Leawood Chamber supports full funding of the statewide multi-modal infrastructure program, including preservation of direct revenue transfers to the State Highway Fund (SHF) and opposes any further diversion of dedicated

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SHF monies for any use other than the funding of eligible transportation projects for which they are intended, 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.