Recognizing the economic realities facing the State of Kansas, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce’s priorities are based on aligning public policy resources with the economic needs of the state focusing on growing the state’s economy. They are aligned and consistent with the advocacy agendas of our civic and business community partners, including the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City.

The KC Chamber supports adequate investment in innovative economic development strategies and a pro-business stable regulatory environment that will help the Kansas City area grow and remain globally competitive. The Chamber advocates for responsible measures to increase the availability of capital for new, expanding, and culturally diverse business. In support of economic development and businesses of all sizes, the Chamber takes the following positions:

• Support efforts to ensure the state’s economic development incentives and tools used within the Kansas City metropolitan area are utilized solely for projects that create net new jobs in the Kansas City region.
• Support increased availability of capital for new and expanding businesses without diluting existing incentives.
• Opposes additional transfers from the Economic Development Incentives Fund (EDIF).

Small, Diverse & Emerging Business

The KC Chamber supports enhancing initiatives to improve the climate for small business growth and development including:

• seed capital fund, angel investor tax credits and proof of concept grant funding.
• measures to make development tax credits transferable.
• adequate funding for incubators.
• entrepreneurial assistance programs with special consideration for diverse and disadvantaged business.
• strengthening the commercialization infrastructure at Kansas research institutions.
• measures to require the state conduct a cost-benefit analysis before creating any new or additional regulatory boards or commissions in an effort to reduce barriers to occupation and employments.
Tax Policy

The KC Chamber supports a balanced tax structure including tax reform and exemption measures that acknowledge the economic realities and unique competitive environment of the Kansas City region and in which all income-earners pay a reasonable tax rate. In support of economic growth and sustained high quality of life, the Chamber takes the following positions:

- **Oppose** expansion of sales tax on professional and labor services.
- **Support** a tax structure that enables funding of pro-business policy initiatives and eliminates additional reductions in critical programs including education, infrastructure and the well being of all Kansans.
- **Support** the ability of cities and counties to preserve local control and taxing and spending authority including repeal of the requirement for a public vote to approve property tax increases.
- In its efforts to reduce business costs by improving health and wellness within the Kansas workforce, the KC Chamber supports an appropriate increase in the taxation of tobacco products.

Business Climate

- **Support** promotion, advancement and necessary funding to elevate the stature of University of Kansas School of Medicine including support for the University of Kansas Medical Center’s Comprehensive Cancer Research-To-Cure Initiative.

Immigration

The KC Chamber encourages federal resolution to immigration reform and opposes state legislation increasing enforcement costs and penalties on businesses and local governments, or threatening the business licenses of employers who have unintentionally hired undocumented workers.

Human, Animal, and Plant Sciences

The KC Chamber supports the pursuit of international excellence in life sciences research and development which is a vital tool for job creation in our region and the state.

- **Support** measures to enhance the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor extending from Manhattan, KS to Columbia, MO including, policies and programs to advance animal health research and development in and around the National Bio-Agro Defense Facility in Manhattan.
The KC Chamber supports appropriate investment in transportation infrastructure including new and innovative ways to fund all modes of transportation throughout the state and region. The upgrade of roads, highways, waterways, rail, and air travel in an efficient and cost-effective manner will allow the state to meet its transportation-related local, regional and statewide safety, economic development and quality of life priorities.

- **Oppose** additional transfers from the State Highway Fund and support funding as outlined in the 2010 T-Works Plan.

- **Support** the implementation of an effective multi-modal transportation program aligned with the region’s economic priorities including the use of alternative project delivery methods that accelerate schedules and increase innovation opportunities.

- **Support** regional approaches to public transit and transportation planning.

- **Support** the practice of long-term, multi-year comprehensive transportation programs developed through a combination of KDOT technical analysis with local partner consultations and focused on meeting the state’s transportation-related local, regional and statewide safety, economic development, and quality of life priorities.
The KC Chamber encourages investments in energy reliability and efficiency and supports policies that provide balance between public health and environmental protections without unreasonable economic burdens on Kansas businesses and residents.

• **Support** development and voluntary use of domestic and renewable energy resources that are considered economical and environmentally-friendly, to deliver energy to the Kansas City region and other high demand areas.

• **Support** policies that encourage expansion and development of energy and green infrastructure including alternative fuel transportation and financing options.

• **Support** investments in advanced energy and regulatory models and policies that promote the region’s history of affordable and reliable energy, and oppose those that do not.

With a goal of making the Greater Kansas City region a leader in providing high-quality, affordable healthcare for all its residents, the KC Chamber supports healthcare, behavioral health, and wellness initiatives that ensure sufficient funding for providers and greater access to coverage for the uninsured.

• **Support** expansion of the state’s KanCare program to close the coverage gap for working Kansans, and to ensure adequate funding for healthcare providers serving the economically disadvantaged in Kansas.

• The KC Chamber is generally **opposed** to healthcare benefit mandates and provider mandates.

• **Support** initiatives that encourage physicians, dentists, and allied health professionals to practice in the Kansas City region.

• Preserve the right of local governments to implement **Tobacco 21** and other policies that improve consumer and community health.

• **Support** regional approaches to public safety, including collaboration among emergency first-responders.
In the knowledge-based global marketplace of the 21st century, a well-educated population with technical skills and problem-solving abilities is the key to Kansas City’s innovation, growth, and ability to compete. A high quality, adequately and equitably funded, accessible and accountable early childhood through post-graduate (P-20) public education system is essential to having a skilled workforce and provides the foundation for a competitive economy and an attractive quality of life. The Chamber believes strategic measures to achieve this quality education system are paramount in creating and sustaining a vibrant economy and job growth in the region and the state.

**Early Childhood Education**

- **Support** investments in high-quality early learning and Pre-K opportunities, including those that advance the development of the early education workforce.

- **Support** measures and investments to enhance early learning efforts through the Children’s Initiative Fund and the Kansas Endowment for Youth, including increased investment in home visiting programs that serve young, at-risk children.
K-12 Education

The KC Chamber has high expectations for our regional schools and public education systems. The Chamber supports increased funding to support world-class Pre K-12 education with rigorous student achievement standards, local authority for curriculum development and increased opportunities for local control. The Chamber supports prompt and thoughtful construction of a new school finance formula that takes into account the needs of all stakeholder sectors and supports exemplary standards that reflect the knowledge and skills required of students in the existing and emerging sectors of the economy. A successful new school finance formula will be one that:

- Is based on empirically-based student outcomes targets such as those in the Kansans CAN vision for education.
- Assures the education needs of all Kansas students will be met.
- Assures local authority and provides school districts with financial flexibility to meet unique and extraordinary circumstances.

In support of a world-class public education system, the KC Chamber takes the following additional positions.

- Oppose state mandates, scholarship tax credits, tax tuition credits, vouchers, and changes in local board elections including making school board elections partisan.
- Oppose efforts to reduce the State’s obligation to make suitable provision for finance of the educational interests of the State.

Higher Education & Workforce Development

The KC Chamber supports adequate funding and measures to keep Kansas higher education institutions competitive and affordable, help retain graduates and quality faculty in the state, and provide the region and state with the world-class workforce necessary to compete in the knowledge economy.

- The KC Chamber calls for the restoration of the full $30.6 million cut from higher education funding in 2016 so that funding amounts appropriated for the next two years will reflect pre-allotment levels.
- Support measures to stimulate career and technical education in the state including STEM education and workforce development initiatives designed to enhance the number of qualified employees available for critical jobs in the region including health care, engineering, technology, and life science-related positions.
- Support efforts to retain the autonomy of the Kansas Board of Regents and local control for the Johnson County Community College Board of Trustees.
2017 PUBLIC POLICY COUNCIL

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Burns & McDonnell
City of Kansas City, Missouri
Civic Council of Greater Kansas City
H&R Block
Hallmark
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