



KANSAS

Legislative Update

Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce 2021 Kansas Legislative Priorities Report

COVID-19 Liability Protections: The KC Chamber was pleased to see the Legislature pass extension of COVID-19 related liability protections for health care providers, PPE makers and businesses. During these uncertain times, our business community needs a sense of certainty that if all reasonable attempts are made at safety, they will not be subject to frivolous lawsuits. Targeted legislation like this provides much-needed stability for the business community during highly uncertain times.

Workforce Development: The KC Chamber has been working on a suite of workforce development initiatives that have been working their way through the Kansas Legislature since last year. The Chamber was pleased to see the following provisions pass this year:

Kansas Promise Scholarship: The Kansas Promise Scholarship program expands scholarship opportunities for Kansas high school graduates who wish to attend a junior college or technical college and gain a degree in a high-demand field.

Concurrent and Dual Enrollment: Allows for school districts to pay tuition for students who complete concurrent or dual enrollment coursework at a school of higher education.

Licensing Reciprocity: Streamlines the process for occupational license reciprocity, which allows military spouses who hold a valid out-of-state occupational license to practice in Kansas and also streamlines the process to receive a Kansas occupational license for folks wishing to move or work in the state.

University Engineering Initiative: Continues the extension of the program to transfer \$10.5M to ensure the states three largest public universities can continue to provide quality STEM education for our future workforce.

Workforce Opportunities for Returning Citizens: The KC Chamber was proud to have helped lead the effort to pass HB 2401 which allows the Secretary of Corrections to establish a 501(c)3 nonprofit foundation to fundraise for the establishment of educational programs and buildings inside Kansas' prisons and other facilities. The KC Chamber was also happy to see the passing of a bill to expand drug treatment programs for individuals on diversion. Bills like these offer a more comprehensive and effective corrections system, all the while helping grow the pipeline of able workers for Kansas businesses. The Chamber looks forward to further engagement in these efforts next year.

STAR Bonds: The KC Chamber was happy to see the extension of the STAR Bonds program in the State of Kansas to ensure robust economic development and regional competitiveness for jobs and businesses.



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The changes in the program also ensure transparency and adequate oversight for judicial use of this program.

Angel Investor Tax Credit: The KC Chamber was eager to see the Legislature pass the extension on this program to allow startups and other entrepreneurs to raise much-needed early-stage capital for businesses. Programs like this signal to folks that Kansas is open for business.

Taxes: The KC Chamber was pleased to see the bill containing clarifying language centered around internet sales tax collection in the state and requiring the collection and remittance of sales and compensating use tax by most marketplace facilitators beginning July 1, 2021. Entities with annual gross receipts from sales sourced into Kansas in excess of \$100,000 are subject to the requirement. The Chamber was also happy to see SB 47 pass which provides that for calendar years 2021 and 2022, for wages paid to employees temporarily teleworking in a state other than their primary work location, employers would have the option to withhold income taxes based on the state of each employee's primary work location, instead of the state in which the employee is teleworking. This mirrors the language of the Governor's Executive Order for 2020.

Transgender Sports Ban: The KC Chamber supports the Governor's veto on the bill regarding a ban on transgender athletes participating in the sport of the gender with which they identify. Legislation like this inhibits Kansas businesses' abilities to attract a world-class workforce, and the state's abilities to attract sporting events, conventions and other new businesses.

Medicaid Expansion: Despite hopes at the beginning of the session for bipartisan cooperation on a Medicaid Expansion agreement, the Chamber was disappointed to see the Legislature fail to act on a Medicaid Expansion bill. The Chamber has been a top voice for Medicaid Expansion for several years and continues to call on the Legislature to support programs that provide greater access to coverage for uninsured individuals, which will prepare the state's Medicaid system to maximize federal funding opportunities.

Thank you to Kansas legislative leaders for their support of these priorities

The business-friendly policy priorities the KC Chamber advocates for on the behalf of our more than 2,000 members are vital to maintaining the economic vibrancy of our metropolitan region. The KC Chamber thanks Kansas legislators, legislative leadership and policy makers who supported these business policy priorities as adopted by the KC Chamber and encourages the Legislature to maintain these critical legislative victories and to work next session to expand Medicaid, increase workforce development initiatives, and grow Kansas' economic vibrancy which will foster prosperity across the state.