



Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

2023 KANSAS PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

Approved by the KC Chamber Board of Directors on December 19, 2022

The greater Kansas City region is a pinnacle community for growth, economic development, workforce attraction, quality of life, and is a top economic catalyst for the state of Kansas. Kansas City is positioned to grow exponentially in the next three years as we open a new world class air terminal, host the internationally-renowned NFL Draft and FIFA World Cup, add world class infrastructure to our region and continue to grow businesses and advance prosperity for all. The KC business community calls on our partners in the Legislature to be part of the Kansas City regional renaissance, supporting our local leaders as they to continue to build on our region's successes and invite you to join us as we bring growth and prosperity to the great state we call home.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education

The KC Chamber supports efforts to expand access to, and affordability of, childcare and early childhood education and advocates. This includes supporting:

- Measures to improve recruitment and retention of quality workforce educators;
- Increasing in the supplemental allocation to support Pre-K and efforts to expand home visiting programs;
- Childcare access for late-evening/early-morning shift workers; and
- Infant/toddler special education.

K-12 Education

The KC Chamber believes the success of all students and our community requires a high quality public education system with sufficient funding, adequately compensates teachers, and keeps high standards for transparency, performance, growth, and outcomes aligned with community and workforce needs. The Chamber supports measures to enhance teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention and advocates for local authority of school boards and non-partisan school board elections. The Chamber takes the following positions:

- Support measures to assist and incentivize competency-based education to better align with local workforce needs;
- Support measures to increase dual credit/dual enrollment programs; and,
- Support policies and funding that enhance community-based behavioral and mental health initiatives in schools.

Higher Education & Post-Secondary Opportunities

- Support for increasing current levels of state funding as requested by the Kansas Board of Regents;
- Support the state's higher education institutions and investments in significant regional higher education assets;
- Support efforts by state lawmakers to capture federal research funding for all Kansas public universities; and,
- Support measures to stimulate career, technical, and trade education in the state including STEM education and workforce development initiatives.

Workforce Development

- Support funding for programs that help increase internships, apprenticeships, workplace readiness, adult education, and workforce certification programs;
- Support policies to make the state and the greater Kansas City region more attractive and accessible to the immigrant workforce;
- Support policy and strategies to improve access to safe, quality, healthy, attainable housing;
- Support workforce training, re-entry programs, and other criminal justice initiatives that encourage returning citizens and other at-risk citizens to become employed and reduce recidivism; and,

- Support measures to expand bistate training, certification, reciprocity, and credentialing opportunities.

PROSPEROUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The KC Chamber supports a pro-business environment, the reduction of red-tape, and investment in effective and efficient economic development programs and financing tools that will help the Kansas City area grow and remain globally competitive. The Chamber takes the following positions:

- Support tax certainty for employers and employees regarding remote work allowing employers to determine the location where remote work is deemed to be performed, and advocate for balanced taxation and fiscally responsible measures that don't eliminate critical safety-net investments;
- Support the preservation of local taxing and spending authorities;
- Support Federal and State economic development investment and financing tools, including programs such as Opportunity Zones and STAR Bonds and oppose additional transfers from the Economic Development Incentives Fund (EDIF);
- Support the pro-business, equitable distribution of recovery and relief funds;
- Support funding mechanisms to expand access to capital for small business, including those in LMI communities, and Right to Start policies that grow entrepreneurial capacity in the region for small, diverse, and emerging businesses; and,
- Measures to enhance the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor and National Security Crossroads initiative, and commercialization opportunities stemming from NBAF.

BUSINESS-FRIENDLY CLIMATE

In an increasingly complex 21st century economy, the KC Chamber calls for a climate of legislative and regulatory stability, predictability, and efficiency allowing businesses to plan for growth and expansion. This includes supporting:

- Added protections for employees based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and opposing legislation that enables discriminatory policies of any kind;
- Measures to improve Kansas's legal climate supporting civil justice reform and opposing legislation that would create or expand liability;
- Equitable and data-informed policies that reduce violent crime in Kansas's metropolitan areas;
- Policies to secure and enforce the right to vote and making voting safe and accessible for all voters while maintaining election integrity; and
- Adequate funding of the judiciary and a non-partisan, non-election process for selecting quality judges.

Military Affairs

The KC Chamber supports stable funding for the military services at a level that maintains end strength necessary to ensure our forces' readiness and lethality; efforts to increase the quality of life for Service members and their families, including more opportunities for spousal employment and better connection to jobs for those who transition out of the military; and investments in infrastructure and capacity at our region's installations and within the defense industrial base.

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation

The KC Chamber supports appropriate investment in all modes of transportation infrastructure throughout the region, which includes supporting:

- Effective and innovative ways to help capture federal investment;
- Funding to promote and study regional approaches to public transit and transportation planning;
- Funding the upgrade of roads, highways, waterways, passenger and freight rail, and air travel in a responsible, efficient, and cost-effective manner will allow the state to meet its transportation-related quality of life priorities, which include safety, economic development, technological advancement, and workforce development; and,
- Policies that allow local and state government agencies the flexibility to use progressive and collaborative alternative delivery models for projects.

Digital Equity and Broadband

Quality and affordable broadband infrastructure is important to support business operations, enable

entrepreneurs to start and grow new businesses, and help residents learn and engage in the 21st century economy. The KC Chamber supports necessary investments in broadband infrastructure, digital equity, and the deployment of funding in our region through programs such as public-private partnerships (P3s) with internet service providers.

Energy & Environment

The KC Chamber encourages investments in renewable energy, balanced energy solutions, energy efficiency and reliability and supports policies that support public health and environmental protections without unreasonable economic burdens on industry, business, and Kansas residents. The Chamber also supports policies that will not eliminate energy options for local consumers or mandate fuel sources or energy-specific technologies. The Chamber supports the development and voluntary use of affordable and reliable energy resources to deliver energy to Kansas City and other high-demand areas. The Chamber also supports transmission policies that get renewable energy to market and enable partnerships between local utilities and landowners.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

There is an undeniable link between the financial health of our businesses and the overall health and wellness of our workforce. The KC Chamber supports measures to advance quality healthcare and address social determinants of health. This includes supporting telehealth; wellness initiatives that ensure sufficient funding for providers; and the improvement, collection, and access of public health data. The Chamber takes the following positions:

- Support expansion of the state's KanCare program to close the coverage gap for working Kansans and ensure adequate funding for healthcare providers serving the uninsured population in Kansas;
- Support the measures to maintain the stature of University of Kansas School of Medicine and the University of Kansas Cancer Center;
- Support investments in a strong state and local public health infrastructure to ensure that communities are protected from, and able to respond to public health threats;
- Support the appropriation of opioid settlement dollars awarded to the state to support behavioral health needs, including increased mental health services, substance abuse treatment and harm reduction programs; and,
- Generally opposed to healthcare benefit mandates and provider mandates.