

LEAWOOD CHAMBER'S 2010 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Leawood Chamber encourages the State to handle its financial affairs like a business would, looking for ways to streamline operations to reduce the cost of providing services and to exercise fiscal responsibility. Following are the business objectives (not presented in priority order) on which the Chamber has taken positions for the 2010 Kansas session.

Invest in and Modernize Programs that Promote Economic Development

Modernize and Continue State Economic Development Programs

- Provide support and funding for State business retention and recruiting programs
- Improving transferability and salability of tax credits
- Conversion of existing tax credit incentive programs to cash based programs as appropriate
- Provide quality and relevant workforce development and job creation programs

Promote a Competitive Business & Tax Climate in Kansas

In general, all policies should help control or reduce the cost of doing business in Kansas. The following items are areas of particular interest to the Chamber:

- Implement a fair and reasonable approach to return the state's unemployment fund to solvency
- Reinforce the integrity of the workers compensation system with careful attention to rules that create waste in the costs of the system for employers
- Ensuring an impartial and cost-effective legal system
- Maintaining fair and responsible tax policies for businesses
- Oppose sales tax on services
- Oppose actions by State government that merely shift tax burdens from State government to businesses or other units of government.
- Oppose any new statutory or constitutional limits on government's current taxing, borrowing, or spending authority as well as any new procedural obstacles to the exercise of government's existing authority to tax, borrow, or spend (such as TABOR). Arbitrary limitations on this authority inhibit government's ability to manage its financial affairs and perform governmental functions in a timely and efficient manner.

Continue to Invest in Life Sciences

Support policies for funding and continued development of the area of Life Sciences that promotes the public health and welfare of our citizens, including but not limited to:

- Kansas Bioscience Authority
- Achieving NCIS designation for KU Medical Center
- Animal Health Corridor.

Develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan

A well planned transportation system is crucial for the economic vitality of our State.

- Develop a comprehensive transportation plan that includes highways, as well as other modes of transportation, including public transit.
- Identify diverse strategies to fund programs as economic conditions improve
- Transportation investments should included a comprehensive cost benefit analysis that takes into account the overall economic impact of these investments to the State's economy

Promote Fair Competition and Limited Government Regulation in the Marketplace

When a marketplace is governed effectively by market dynamics, government should seek to minimize regulatory burdens. Government policy should ultimately seek to empower customers, not regulators. Accordingly, government should refrain, to the maximum extent possible, from regulating the marketplace so as to promote fair competition and stimulate investment in an atmosphere of regulatory predictability.

Health Care

The Chamber opposes any unnecessary expansion of health care mandates that would increase the cost of health care insurance. The Chamber supports fiscally responsible health care reform initiatives that promote cost-effectiveness and ensure that businesses and their employees have reasonable access to quality, affordable health care coverage options.

Provide Appropriate Mechanisms for the Adequate Funding of Public Education

Because appropriate funding for quality public education is a critical investment in economic development, the Leawood Chamber supports:

- Fundamental reform of the school finance formula to maximize resources and expand local funding flexibility and control over how education funds are raised and spent.
- Maintaining investment in higher education to preserve affordability and produce a well trained workforce.
- Innovative programs that develop a workforce with strong math, science, engineering and technology skills.

Develop a Comprehensive, Incentive based, Energy Program

A long-term comprehensive energy plan should be developed that achieves an appropriate balance between environmental benefits and project costs, while ensuring affordable, reliable and ample power for the region. The plan should include legislative and/or regulatory incentive policies to promote investment in energy efficiency measures, as well as affordable and reasonable actions by the State of Kansas to promote energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in state government operations.