



LENEXA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

PANDEMIC RELIEF & RECOVERY

Facilitate Pandemic Relief and Recovery

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber supports consideration of state policies that assist business recovery to restore the state's economy, including such measures as:

- Accessing stimulus incentives;
- Facilitating adequate capital;
- Providing limited tax forgiveness;
- Extending business liability protections;
- Establishing strong supply chains;
- Updating emergency procedures and clarifying guidance;
- Helping to replenish the Employment Security Trust Fund; and
- Reducing or suspending regulations.

TAXATION

Support Tax Policies That Preserve Johnson County's Economy & Quality of Life

The Chamber supports pursuing balanced income, sales, and property tax policies that adequately fund the core state budget while preserving Johnson County's economic competitiveness and quality of life, including:

- Maintaining tax rates that do not unreasonably burden or disadvantage Kansas businesses;
- Preserving market-driven exemptions;
- Continuing the sales tax exclusion for professional services;
- Revisiting sales tax collections by out-of-state sellers and third-party administrators to improve marketplace fairness;
- Reinstating for non-corporate business taxpayers the income tax expensing deduction for capital investments, back in parity with corporate taxpayers;
- Decoupling certain state income tax provisions from federal provisions, including the option to take itemized deductions.

Retain Flexible Revenue and Spending Authority

The Chamber opposes the imposition of state or local tax and spending lids and other unreasonably burdensome mandates for reporting and approving tax or budget measures and supports repeal of the mandated public vote on utilization of increased local property tax revenues.

EDUCATION

Support K-12 Public Education to Build Our Workforce

The Chamber supports K-12 education policies that:

- Maintain operational funding and early childhood resources that adequately enable Johnson County students to prepare for post-secondary success and workforce-readiness, do not unreasonably burden the needs of taxpayers or shortchange other core state services;
- Remove the sunset provision and make permanent high-density at-risk weighting for individual school buildings;
- Respect local control over funding, spending, and curriculum choices; and
- Address barriers to K-12 apprenticeships, shadowing, and on-the-job training programs.

To help ensure access and quality for all students, the Chamber opposes programs that divert public funds, directly or indirectly, to private alternatives

not subject to the same mandates, regulations, and accountability requirements governing public schools.

Fund a Strong & Affordable Public Post-Secondary Education System

The Chamber supports policies and state investment in public post-secondary education that:

- Helps ensure affordable access and quality for all students;
- Promotes programs that match workforce needs, including career/technical training and certifications;
- Rewards efficiency and outcomes; and
- Supports R&D and commercialization, moving innovation into industry.

TRANSPORTATION

Continue Dedicated Infrastructure Investment

The Chamber supports fully funding the new statewide multi-modal Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program (known as IKE), including:

- Continuing the direct transfer of state sales tax revenues to the State Highway Fund (SHF);
- Providing ongoing and expanded opportunities for local input and partnership; and
- Opposing diversion of SHF sales tax revenues statutorily intended for transportation to other purposes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Maintain Competitive Economic Development

The Chamber supports:

- Maintaining competitive and responsible state and local economic development tools that can attract or retain a variety of job creation, capital investment, and entrepreneurial opportunities;
- Developing an updated vision and strategic plan for economic development in Kansas;
- Investing adequate resources in Department of Commerce staff, marketing, and programs; and
- Strengthening workforce development initiatives.

KEY BUSINESS COSTS

Preserve Reasonable Unemployment Compensation & Workers Compensation Costs

The Chamber supports unemployment compensation and workers compensation policies that promote stability and fairness, protect employer costs, reduce administrative burdens, and encourage employment and accountability.

In responding to COVID-19 impacts on the unemployment compensation system, the Chamber further supports replenishing the Employment Security Trust Fund in a manner that is equitable, supports business recovery, and fairly addresses fraud in unemployment compensation claims.

Support an Impartial & Cost-Effective Legal System

The Chamber supports a fair, nonpartisan, efficient, stable, and cost-effective legal system to resolve business disputes, including protecting businesses from unwarranted COVID-19 liability claims and exploring constitutional methods of providing reasonable damage caps.

To help ensure an independent and qualified judiciary, the Chamber also supports a non-election process for selecting judges.

Promote Affordable Health Care Coverage

The Chamber supports to the extent possible market-driven health care that reduces costs and promotes greater efficiency, prevention, and enhanced quality of care without imposing substantial new mandates or penalties.

Because most health care costs of low-income uninsured individuals are currently being passed on to others in the system, the Chamber also supports fiscally-responsible Kansas solutions for expanding income-based coverage while improving the quality, efficiency, and outcomes of the state's Medicaid system.

Respect Employer/Employee Relations

Because employers and employees should remain empowered to decide employment issues based upon individual market circumstances, the Chamber opposes legislation that substantially intercedes in employer-employee relations, including unreasonable mandates or restrictions in hiring, compensating, accommodating, or terminating employees.

STANDING POSITIONS

The Chamber supports:

- A stable and limited regulatory environment with minimal administrative burden.
- A property tax appraisal system that is equitable, rational, and consistent.
- Preservation of local control and home rule authority for local governments over the funding, regulation, and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve, including determination of partisanship of local elections.
- A diverse long-term energy plan that responsibly balances environmental goals with ample statewide power and reasonable costs, including focusing on incentive-based measures and energy efficiency rather than imposing unreasonable mandates and caps.

STANDING POSITIONS CONT'D

The Chamber supports:

- A balanced immigration policy created and enforced at the federal level to ensure consistency, rather than state-level action that creates additional mandates for employers or threatens unreasonable penalties for employers who unintentionally hire or assist illegal workers.

- Kansas Open Records Act exemptions and other privacy provisions that protect confidential proprietary business information.

The Chamber opposes:

- Unfunded mandates on local governments, shifting state responsibilities without the accompanying continuous financial resources necessary for implementation.

- Expansion of current initiative and referendum provisions in Kansas.

ABOUT THE STATE LEGISLATURE

The state legislature typically convenes the second week of January each year for a scheduled 90-day session, adjourning in early April and reconvening again in late April/early May for the "veto session," a wrap-up period when lawmakers can reconsider bills that have been vetoed by the governor and take action on any unfinished business.

More information about the state legislature and its activities, including the full text of legislation, rosters, contact information, calendars, committee schedules, and both real-time and archived video/audio links may be found on the legislature's website www.kslegislature.org.

Have a question? Try the State Library's toll-free legislative hotline at (800) 432-3924 (calls and questions are confidential.)

Legislative action is also often detailed and tagged on Twitter using #ksleg.



ABOUT CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Representing more than 600 area businesses, the Lenexa Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit business organization with decades of service in creating and preserving a strong business climate and high quality of life in both the Lenexa community and metropolitan region.

The Chamber's Legislative Affairs program contributes to business success by actively advocating for governmental policies that promote business growth and economic competitiveness, empowering our members to effectively engage in important public policy issues, enhancing the Chamber's visibility and communication with elected policymakers, and serving as an informational resource to both members and the public on legislative matters.

It's good for business!



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