Overland Park Chamber™

2026 Federal Public Policy Platform

The Overland Park Chamber of Commerce encourages diligent, selfless, and bipartisan service to address the issues facing the United States in a proficient, timely, and transparent manner. The Chamber supports reasonable, fact-based free-market efforts and solutions for improving our local, regional, and national safety, economic vitality, and quality of life. When a problem arises that the market cannot adequately address, the Chamber supports developing reasonable, fact-based legislative and regulatory solutions that are developed in partnership with government and business. These solutions should reward outcomes and compliance and treat all companies and business categories in a fair, equitable, stable and predictable manner. The Chamber encourages cooperation between all levels of government to provide more efficient delivery of services while maximizing the return on investment for taxpayers.

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2026 FEDERAL PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM

CYBERSECURITY AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

The Chamber supports continued development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies that balance the benefits of AI against individual rights and freedoms. Further, the Chamber believes that the advancement of AI policies should support innovation while being mindful of how new automated technologies impact the workforce, societal norms, and existing laws.

The Chamber supports urgent action on a unified national data privacy framework to protect data and privacy, promote transparency, and provide regulatory certainty in the marketplace.

EDUCATION

The Chamber supports policies and programs, and adequate funding thereof, that encourage the development of a robust P-20 public education system emphasizing a rigorous science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculum based on globally competitive standards. These programs should prepare students to succeed in the 21st-century workforce through an innovative curriculum and practical hands-on experiences to enhance success in pursuit of post-secondary education or employment in a skilled trade.

P-20 Public Education System

The Chamber Supports

- Increased funding for Graduate Medical Education in response to the shortage of physicians (especially in primary care).
- Increased investment in high-quality early childhood learning and development and childcare programs that integrate early learning with K-12 education and are available to all children.
- Funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act at the authorized 40% level so that local school districts do not have to divert other education funding streams to make up the current funding gap.
- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.
- Policies and programs that promote access to and affordability of higher education, such as student loans and grants and similar student financial aid programs.
- The identification and implementation of policies and programs to address the shortage of credentialed teachers - with an emphasis on teachers in STEM related fields - where a lack of competitiveness with the business sector together with increasing numbers of teacher retirements make this an area of critical need.
- Continued state regulation and oversight of charter schools.
- Continued and enhanced investment in veterans' education benefits.
- Universal access to high-speed internet and/or other technologies that enable distance learning for all students regardless of their location.

The Chamber Opposes

- Cuts to Medicaid funding to public schools that pay for services and equipment provided to special education students, including school-based screening and treatment for students from low-income families.
- The use of public tax funds to subsidize private education.
- Eliminating a federal role in education unless suitable provisions are made, in coordination with the states, to ensure appropriate funding and oversight of current mission-essential programs administered by the federal government, including financial aid and civil rights enforcement.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE & PUBLIC SAFETY

Emergency Preparedness

Natural disasters, pandemics, and other catastrophic events create disruptions for citizens and businesses alike.

- The Chamber supports the enactment of policies and procedures that equip affected parties with the resources and flexibility needed to address public safety as well as economic, regulatory, and statutory barriers to recovery with minimal delay.
- The Chamber supports the adoption of timely, targeted, and temporary liability protection for businesses providing equipment and supplies or otherwise engaging in commercial activity during declared emergencies.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is a critical state partner in response to large-scale natural disasters. The Chamber urges the Administration and Congress to support FEMA through appropriate funding levels and spending that allow for quick and suitable-scale response to requests from the nation's governors for emergency assistance.

Public Safety

- The Chamber supports efforts to address the rising occurrence of organized retail theft through enhanced coordination among jurisdictions, increased policing, increased prosecution, and stronger penalties for those convicted of large-scale retail crimes.

ENERGY

The Chamber supports a comprehensive national energy policy that is innovative and economical. Policy should encourage energy efficiency and conservation, sustainability, and security, and it must also support the diverse energy portfolio of our region.

The Chamber Supports

- Energy policy that encourages a diversified, sustainable energy supply that is reliable and can be acquired in surplus to protect against disruptions.
- Energy policy that considers all forms of available energy including natural gas, coal, nuclear, hydro, wind, hydrogen, solar, battery, electric, and biofuels to meet growing demand.
- Energy policy that supports energy independence and efficiencies in production and usage, including reasonable expansion of domestic oil and gas exploration.
- Energy policy that would not unduly raise energy costs.
- Upgrades and expansion of our national transmission and distribution infrastructure with emphasis on reliability and safety.
- Investment in technologies for renewable energy and the commercialization of emerging energy technologies.

- Extending and expanding tax credits that support funding for renewable energy projects.
- Balancing private property rights with the need to expand energy capacity.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Chamber supports legislation that fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and job creation.

The Chamber Supports

- Legislation that makes changes to the federal regulatory process to lessen government burdens on job-creators.
- Legislation that modifies the tax code to encourage investment in new businesses.
- Legislation that seeks to accelerate the commercialization of university research that can lead to new ventures.

ENVIRONMENT

The Chamber supports a system of environmental standards that provides a balance between ensuring the availability and sustainability of natural resources while ensuring enhanced quality of life and economic growth in the region. Environmental policy should be based on sound scientific data relying on tested and proven human health impacts.

The Chamber supports consistent, long-term solutions to environmental concerns that provide stability, sustainability, and predictability to minimize uncertainty and implementation costs for businesses.

Air Quality

The Chamber Supports

- Federal air quality legislation that does not cause economic burden on industry and American job loss and ensures public health protection.

Emissions Standards

The Chamber Supports

- Balanced and reasonable national environmental change policies that are equitable to all regions and industries, encourage innovation and economic growth and achieve sustainable environmental benefits.
- Legislation that would encourage the accelerated development and deployment of greenhouse gas reduction technology and the reduction of barriers to the development of climate-friendly energy sources.
- Emission control policies - including carbon capture - that:
  - Are free market-focused and not mandated by governmental entities;
  - Do not jeopardize job growth and creation; and
  - Address solutions on a macro vs micro level.

The Chamber Opposes

- Policies that would raise energy costs for businesses in ways that jeopardize job creation.
- Carbon regulation aimed at impacting climate change should not be addressed and cannot be solved by state or regional approaches.

Water Quality

The Chamber Supports

- Efforts by local, state, and federal government for sound watershed management through the application of reasonable standards and educational resources.
- The Wet Weather Community Sustainability Act which offers both a technology-based and water quality-based approach to help municipalities manage peak wet weather events in a cost-effective manner that is protective of the environment and public health and consistent with Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements.
- Reauthorization of Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) to support more resilient design, increase funding and financing options to reduce project backlogs, and remove barriers to non-federal sponsor investment. The Chamber encourages the federal government to place more emphasis on utilizing the assets and expertise of the private sector in carrying out WRDA projects.
- Increase funding for the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) programs and require the use of Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) for engineering on federally funded drinking water projects.
- Reauthorize and provide increased funding for the Water Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program
- The USDA Rural Development Water & Wastewater Loan and Grant Program with increased loans and grant funding.

Natural Disaster Mitigation

The Chamber Supports

- Evaluating and updating our aging stormwater management system and programs by federal agencies, including FEMA, NOAA, EPA, and SERDP. This includes their efforts to evaluate current design standards that keep up with our changing climate to better prepare for and mitigate flooding.
- The Chamber urges the Administration and Congress to support state and local government efforts to prevent and mitigate large-scale threats to life and property through appropriately funded federal programs and services.

GOVERNMENTAL/FISCAL MANAGEMENT

The Chamber supports fiscal policy that stimulates economic growth through careful and comprehensive evaluation of spending coupled with sound revenue strategies. We believe "zero-based budgeting," working towards a balanced federal budget, and reducing the national debt are important objectives in a healthy national economy. This is particularly important as federal spending on interest payments has become the second largest spending category in the federal budget. However, the Chamber also recognizes that extenuating circumstances may require difficult solutions that, from time to time, require actions contrary to these objectives.

The Chamber believes responsible fiscal management requires deliberative planning, adoption of timely federal budgets with all associated appropriations, and reduced reliance on continuing resolutions.

The Chamber Supports

- Fiscal policies that stimulate economic growth through careful and comprehensive evaluation of domestic and foreign spending.
- Modification of maintenance of effort requirements in ways that ensure federal grants and cost-sharing funds are spent for the purposes intended but do not otherwise impinge upon state and local elected officials' ability to appropriate funds or set policy.
- Enactment of longer-term legislation, especially regarding regularly recurring issues, such as debt ceiling and budgets

(with corresponding appropriations), to provide stability and predictability.

- Use of measurable performance standards and accountability by inspectors general and congressional oversight, coupled with appropriate staffing and funding, to ensure the timely delivery of government-supported services including U.S. Mail, and international travel documents.
- Directed spending for locally merited projects identified through engagement and analysis with local, state, and non-governmental partners.
- Reduced reliance on executive orders and other short-term policy directives that create uncertainty and inconsistency for businesses and organizations and cause instability and unpredictability for business employment and investment.

The Chamber Opposes

- Last-minute, short-term fixes and gimmicks in response to legislative and budgetary challenges.
- Withholding or clawing back federal funding for not following arbitrary directives of the executive branch.
- Shifting funding of large-scale programs from the federal government to states when the costs are prohibitively expensive for states to effectively and appropriately fund such programs.

HEALTH CARE

The Chamber supports an accessible, affordable health and high-quality care delivery system that balances the needs of consumers with demands placed on employers and taxpayers to provide adequate insurance coverage to all citizens.

The Chamber Supports

- Allocation of appropriate levels of funding from the federal government to cover the cost of providing health care services (including home and community-based services) through Medicare, Medicaid, and other such governmental programs.
- Mitigation of the impact of recent federal policy changes impacting hospital financial well-being and Medicaid funding.
- System enhancements and funding to support increased access to mental health services, a strong and sustainable safety net, and parity for mental health services on par with physical health coverage.
- Proposals that improve access to, and training for, physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals - including mental health professionals - coupled with increased funding for Graduate Medical Education in response to the shortage of physicians (especially in primary care).The creation of a reliable technological infrastructure to support the delivery of health care services – such as telemedicine - to all parts of the country along with provider reimbursement rates for telemedicine on par with traditional, in-person models.
- Extending and making permanent changes enacted on a temporary basis during the COVID-19 Pandemic to support the use of telemedicine.
- Modification of the ACA, with a contemporaneous effective date, if such action provides a comprehensive replacement policy that includes or provides, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Reconsideration and reformulation of the most onerous provisions of the ACA that adversely affect business, including the employer mandate and the new taxes that will result in higher premiums passed on to employers and employees, including, without limitation.
  - Repeal of the employer mandate, assessing penalties on larger employers (50+ employees) that do not provide minimum value and affordable coverage to employees.
  - Return the requirement to be considered a full-time employee from the ACA's 30-hours/week definition to the historical 40-hours/week.
  - Extension of full federal funding for three years (from the date of adoption or approval of a state's waiver request) for new state adoptions of Medicaid expansion programs or other incentives to states designed to provide or increase coverage to uninsured and under-insured patients.
- Reasonable, evidence-based governmental initiatives, with corresponding funding provided, for the expansion of quality improvement, information technology, and transparency initiatives.
- Appropriate level of support and funding for safety net clinics and other access points to encourage health care provisions at the most efficient and least costly stage.
- Protection of tax incentives and non-tax status for those providers documenting community benefit through various activities including, but not limited to, charity care.
- Protecting and strengthening the community benefit associated with 340B hospitals while safeguarding fair contracting practices, allowing providers to stretch scarce federal resources for the overall health and benefit of our communities.
- Programs that promote a greater emphasis on personal responsibility, healthy lifestyles, and the resulting private and governmental program incentives and supports.
- Incentives for businesses to provide health insurance for employees.

- Incentives for individuals to purchase health insurance. Investigate collaborative efforts with states to provide high-risk pools for individuals and employers to obtain health care coverage.
- Continue to evaluate and encourage proven alternatives to traditional healthcare delivery that will result in greater accessibility and affordability to Kansas employers and residents, reducing the number of uninsured and underinsured.
- Private and employer-based healthcare solutions that increase access to quality healthcare and reduced costs with emphasis on improved affordability for small businesses.
- A better, less disruptive path to access by building on the current public-private system by expanding Medicaid in non-expansion states; stabilizing the insurance exchanges by restoring cost-sharing subsidies for low-income consumers and implementing well-designed reinsurance programs; increasing subsidies to more lower-income people wanting to purchase private coverage on the marketplaces; and funding efforts to help consumers enroll in health plans. This includes the extension of premium tax credits that have helped millions of Americans purchase affordable commercial health care coverage.

- Continued emphasis on accountability of organ donation and the Organ Procurement Organization (OPO).
- Proposals that improve access to, and training for, physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals - including mental health professionals - coupled with increased funding for Graduate Medical Education in response to the shortage of physicians (especially in primary care).

The Chamber Opposes

- Repeal of the ACA with future effective date proposals that adopt or lead to adoption of a single-payer, government-run healthcare systems such as "Medicare for All.
- Harmful payment policies, including site-neutral policies, that do not adequately account for continuously operating hospitals.
- Federal actions that threaten not only the vitality of our nation's health care system, but also the health, economic security, and innovation capacity to develop treatments, cures, and prevention strategies that directly improve patient outcomes in hospitals and clinics across the country.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Recognizing that not all materials and products can be produced in the United States, the Chamber supports free and fair international trade policies that encourage economic development in northeast Kansas and the rest of the state; reduce trade barriers; protect U.S. intellectual property; modernize export-control rules; eliminate unfair trade practices; and encourage efficient international trade assistance programs through cooperation and coordination among local, state, and federal agencies.

The Chamber Supports

- The Export-Import Bank of the United States (Bank) as a source of funding support that is of critical importance in leveling the international competitive climate for businesses that export goods and services and keeping them and their jobs in our state.
- Timely nomination and Senate confirmation of Export-Import Bank board members, to maintain a quorum necessary for the efficient, effective, and full operation of the Bank.
- Export promotion programs centered on small- and medium-sized businesses which account for most of all exporters.
- Legislation that requires Congressional approval of new or increased tariffs proposed in the interest of national security in accordance with Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.
- Reasonable and balanced international trade agreements that knock down barriers to U.S. businesses abroad and keep our markets open to foreign goods and services – especially in growing markets – such as in Asia – that are essential for Kansas producers.
- Trade, free from tariffs, between the United States and key trading partners whose products and services are critically important to domestic businesses and industries.
- Sustained and consistent trade policies to avoid disruption of supply chains and business employment and investment.

The Chamber Opposes

- Increasing isolation from the world marketplace that threatens economic growth and provides competing nations the opportunity to absorb markets and investments that would otherwise benefit the United States economy.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Chamber supports adding incentives and removing impediments to the use of private capital and resources in the design, construction, and operation of public or public/private projects that enhance local safety, economic development, and quality of life.

The Chamber Supports

- Federal agencies taking a "right size" staffing approach to efficiently handle and respond to normal, and routine demands while looking to contract with the private sector during periods of peak activity.
- A thorough review of federal procurement regulations to identify and remove unnecessary barriers that make it difficult and expensive for businesses to enter into supplier contracts with the federal government.

REGULATORY REFORM

The Chamber believes that the federal regulatory system must be operated in an open and transparent manner. Proposed regulations should undergo rigorous technical analysis and thorough review and comment by those affected to ensure that they are cost-effective, flexible, and minimize regulatory burdens on business.

The Chamber believes it is worthwhile to consider Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards in investment portfolios and corporate decision-making. However, it is prudent that material financial factors are prioritized by fund managers and others when making investment decisions. Governmental mandates should not impinge upon that priority.

Small Business Size Standards

The Chamber Supports

- Exploration of a mid-size business tier addition within the size standards methodology and a mentor-protégé program where mid-tiered firms become mentors to small firms.
- Federal government contracts to be smaller and unbundled, along with a streamlined procurement process, enabling small businesses to pursue more contracts.

Banking Regulation

The Chamber Supports

- Polices that are not harmful to community banks' and credit unions' and other business' ability to grow and expand, because access to credit is a significant factor in economic development.
- Encouraging federal policymakers to only support regulations that are based on core principles for banks that enable them to be successful during any economic cycle.
- An effective and appropriately funded Small Business Administration (SBA) to support America's small businesses. The SBA should not be hindered in its ability to expend appropriations to the extent authorized by Congress.

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

The Chamber believes that a secure retirement for American workers is fundamental to the country's growth and continued prosperity. Public policy should encourage individuals to save, invest, and plan for their retirement.

The Chamber Supports

- Programs that stimulate individual initiative to provide for retirement needs.

- Policies and other reasonable efforts to sustain the long-term solvency of Social Security, including a balanced and appropriate mix of increased contributions, extended retirement age, and potential means testing of benefits.

TAXES

The Chamber supports balanced tax policy that encourages economic growth, prosperity, and job creation that leads to intrastate, interstate, and international competitiveness. The Chamber believes balanced budgets and minimal debt are key principles of sound fiscal policy and movement in that direction should be a priority for the federal government.

Taxation

The Chamber supports:

- Balanced federal tax policies that:
  - Preserve and encourage economic growth, productivity, and jobs.
  - Enhance the global competitiveness of U.S. businesses and encourage multi-national companies to repatriate profits and conduct additional US-based operations while reducing incentives for corporate inversions.
- Preservation and protection of the current legal and tax structure of employee stock ownership plans (ESOP). The Chamber advocates for the enactment of the Promotion and Expansion of Private Employee Ownership Act that eliminates barriers that businesses and their owners face in establishing a new S corporation ESOP or expanding the employee-ownership stake in an S corporation.
- Adoption of tax treaties that support fair taxation on imported and exported goods.
- Elimination of the cutoff age limitations for special needs children.
- Careful evaluation of tax policy to ensure that businesses, especially small businesses, are not unduly burdened by estate taxes.
- Efforts to expand and simplify the R&D tax credit.

The Chamber Opposes

- Efforts to change federal tax policy that would limit the option for qualified service providers to elect the cash method of accounting only to those firms with less than $10 million (or other arbitrary caps) in annual gross revenue.
- Onerous regulations and tax policies that unduly burden small businesses.

Tax Incentives

The Chamber Supports

- Existing tax incentives, including energy, environmental, and economic development tax incentives. These safeguards result in increased protection of the environment while encouraging investment in economic development.

E-Commerce/Fairness

The Chamber Supports

- The Chamber encourages Congress to pass legislation codifying the criteria suggested in Wayfair, including a uniform minimum collection threshold, to provide clear guidance and consistency for states implementing such sales tax collection; however, such legislation should not preempt state and local sales and use tax authority nor otherwise interfere with the distribution of such revenue according to existing formulas under state law. Legislation and related regulations should provide for streamlined collection and remittance processes to minimize the administrative burden on businesses.

TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS; CYBER SECURITY

The Chamber promotes market-based policies to promote private-sector broadband investment and competition. The Chamber supports policies and programs addressing cyber security needs and threats that balance public safety with individual and private-sector rights to privacy.

The Chamber Supports

- Workable privacy laws that protect consumers without unduly inhibiting e-commerce.
- Continued technological development, expansion, and deployment of broadband, which is so vital to small and large, urban, and rural businesses alike, as well as individual consumers, and can best be achieved with significant private investment, which is driven by the forces of competition. Competition spurs private investment, furthers the principles of free enterprise, and stimulates business growth.
- Reasonable measures to protect an individual's constitutional rights to privacy with respect to electronic records and transmission of information – especially regarding minors.
- Development of technologies, processes, practices, and other measures designed to protect computers and computer networks, programs, and data from unauthorized access, attack, and damage.
- Adequate funding to implement and support government-mandated programs and avoiding unfunded mandates on businesses.
- Repeal of outdated laws and regulations that impede U.S. technological innovation, investment, and deployment that are vital to the U.S. economy.
- Continued development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies that balance the benefits of AI against individual rights and freedoms. Further, the Chamber believes that the advancement of AI policies should support innovation while being mindful of how new automated technologies impact the workforce, societal norms, and existing laws.
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- The Chamber supports a unified national data privacy framework to protect consumer data, promote transparency, and provide regulatory certainty in the marketplace.

TRANSPORTATION

The Chamber supports long-term transportation policies with adequate, predictable, dedicated, and sustainable funding that maximizes the benefits derived from local, regional, and national transportation networks.

The Chamber encourages investment in public transportation to increase safety, relieve traffic congestion, minimize vehicle emissions, and provide low-cost modes of transportation that connect employers with employees. Planning and investment in transportation should contemplate emerging modes of

transportation to allow for more cost-efficient implementation of new-to-market solutions.

The Chamber acknowledges we have global leaders in engineering, design, and transportation in our region who are on the cutting edge of future technologies. The Chamber supports policies that encourage investment in these fields and leveraging the world-class expertise they provide.

The Chamber Supports

- Utilization of rights of way whereby opportunities to partner with the private sector to enhance broadband access can be achieved to advance high-speed connectivity and leverage future technologies.
- Predictable and adequate long-term funding and authorization of federal surface transportation infrastructure planning and construction, fully appropriated and approved through annual budgets and timely reauthorizations, rather than through continuing resolutions, to provide planning and budgeting certainty to local and state government.
- Railroad system enhancements that provide for improved regional rail transit options for passenger and freight as well as increased safety. The Chamber supports the use of abandoned rail lines to provide expanded recreational opportunities throughout the region.
- Increased national funding to meet critical national and regional transportation needs in a predictable, sustainable fashion. Its funding should be derived from multiple sources primarily reflecting users' impacts on – and benefits derived from – our transportation network.
- Key features should include:
  - Increasing and indexing for inflation dedicated revenue from fuel taxes and other current user fees to maintain purchasing power (the current gas tax has not been increased since 1993 and has lost more than 64 percent of its original buying power as a result) Exploring new funding sources that will not be diminished by ongoing shifts in vehicle fuel types and ownership patterns. Expanding dedicated policies and resources for accelerating well-defined transportation projects that significantly enhance regional or national economic development.
  - Continued work toward commercialization of emerging modes of transportation.
  - Legislation and regulations that promote the build-out of alternative transportation systems (e.g., Hydrogen fuel cell technologies, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and electric vehicles)
  - Exploration and analysis of sustainable alternatives to motor fuel taxes to support our nation's transportation infrastructure.

To ensure that national infrastructure investments reflect important regional and local priorities, the Chamber further supports:

Adopting federal policies and procedures that:

- Optimize local and state flexibility in meeting regional and local transportation priorities, improving transportation network performance, balancing transportation modes to suit local needs and streamlining transportation project reviews and approvals; and
- Maintain the current federal infrastructure funding share formula at 80 percent federal and 20 percent state/local.
- Create a legal and regulatory framework for fully realizing the potential for connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) that ensures that:
  - The CAV potential can be explored by public and private entities while maintaining or improving our state's vehicle safety record;
  - The cost of CAV-required infrastructure improvements are borne by parties that profit or benefit from them; and
  - Public sector investments in support of CAV deployment do not diminish legacy transportation networks as long as they serve a preponderance of non-CAV users.

WORKFORCE

Recognizing that workforce issues are a major priority for businesses from all sectors, the Chamber supports policies that address workforce needs while minimizing burdensome requirements that directly and indirectly increase costs to the employer.

The Chamber Supports

- Enactment of comprehensive and realistic workforce immigration reform policies that support business workforce needs including:
  - Establishing a reliable, efficient, accurate employment eligibility confirmation system that is easy to use and provides a good faith "safe harbor" to employers relying on the Employment Eligibility Confirmation System.
  - Establishing an earned pathway to legalization for undocumented workers already contributing to our economy, provided that they are law-abiding.
  - A comprehensive update and expansion of the U.S. Visa program to support workforce needs. Key elements of a revised program should include:
    - Greater access to H1B visas for highly skilled workers through increased caps or elimination of caps.
    - Greater access to H2B visas for seasonal workers through increased caps or elimination of caps.
    - Expedited processing of visa requests – especially in critical fields – to ensure access to skilled workers with minimal delays.
    - A formal process for continued re-evaluation and updates to shortage lists like the Department of Labor's Schedule A and Labor Certification lists.

- Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act that would remove the per-nation caps on employment based green cards, creating a merit-based, "first come, first served" legal immigration system for high-skilled employees.
- Training programs and opportunities that provide support for ex-offenders seeking to re-enter the workforce.
- Modernization of labor statutes to address the 21st Century workplace and further clarify the regulation of independent contractor status.
- Efforts of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business groups to overturn newly adopted independent contractor rules finalized by the U.S. Department of Labor.

- Increased funding for Graduate Medical Education in response to the shortage of physicians (especially in primary care).
- Investment in policies and programs that promote workforce development, not only current needs but also including focus on identifying the education, training and skills needed to succeed in the 21st century.
- Continued investment in quality childcare including the Childcare Investment Act and use of CCDBG, CDBG and other available funds to support increased access to childcare.
- Reauthorization and full funding of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) revisions that better address workforce shortages and skill gaps needed to address employer's needs. Changes within the WIOA should provide for more local control and allow states to design workforce systems that address unique regional structures and processes.
- Legislation that provides new opportunities for highly skilled and educated, and entrepreneurial immigrants to stay in the United States where their talent and new ideas can fuel economic growth and create American jobs.
- Adoption of the SAVE Act or similar legislation to provide hospitals with additional tools to protect healthcare worker safety.
- Legislation supporting enhanced opportunities for veterans to utilize services and programs of the Small Business Administration as they pursue private-sector employment opportunities.
- Proposals that improve access to, and training for, physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals - including mental health professionals - coupled with increased funding for Graduate Medical Education in response to the shortage of physicians (especially in primary care).
- The use of confidentiality agreements and non-compete agreements in appropriate situations to protect proprietary information from disclosure by employees and former employees.
- The use of arbitration agreements and class action waiver provisions to reduce legal costs while still protecting the interests of parties involved in disputes.
- Engagement of the federal government in researching the causes and impacts of America's housing crisis, and working with stakeholders to develop appropriate actions that will improve access to attainable home ownership.

The Chamber Opposes

Regulatory expansion of overtime standards such as those unilaterally proposed by the DOL in 2016 that include excessive increases in the salary thresholds triggering overtime pay requirements and increases that do not make allowance for geographic base salary differences, which result in significantly increased compliance costs for business as well as unintended, adverse consequences for employees.

STANDING PRIORITIES

The Chamber's standing policies, which may or may not be introduced in any given Congress, are as follows:

The Chamber supports:

- Legislation and appropriate funding that would advance and promote the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor.
- Legislation and appropriate funding to support advanced manufacturing in Kansas.
- Funding for the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Manhattan, Kan.
- Increased funding for federal research agencies including the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, US Department of Agriculture, and other agencies that provide funding for life sciences research, development, and commercialization.
- Efforts to protect, improve and simplify S corporation tax rules.
- Efforts to permanently extend both the work opportunity tax credit and welfare to work tax credit.
- Restraining the IRS's ability to challenge the use of the cash method of accounting, which adversely affects the nation's small businesses.
- Meaningful bankruptcy reform that rewards personal responsibility and restores fairness to the bankruptcy system.
- Efforts to reduce burdens associated with anti-trust and pre-merger filings and eliminate needless reporting requirements and filing fees.
- Product liability reform and additional tort reform measures that provide fair treatment of business in the courts and before regulatory agencies.
- Current arrangement of employer and union negotiation, including employees' rights to a democratic secret ballot process, and oppose initiatives to 1) abolish secret ballot elections in favor of card check majorities for union recognition and 2) promote the influence of federal government arbitrators in the union contract negotiation process.
- Increased wages for employees that are market driven and not mandated through legislative or regulatory action.
- The family-friendly purpose of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) but favors clarification and simplification of the Act's requirements. The Chamber opposes efforts to expand leave or to mandate paid sick leave under the FMLA.
- Repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, which created a "prevailing wage," usually the union rate, for any construction contract over $2,000 funded in whole or part by the federal government. The repeal of this Act would spur local economic growth by making it easier for state and local governments to fund federally subsidized projects such as school construction and transportation infrastructure improvements and would decrease overall costs to taxpayers.
- Workplace safety by encouraging shared commitments to safety between OSHA and employers. This would include cooperative partnership agreements between OSHA, labor organizations and employers. The Chamber supports an even-handed approach by OSHA that recognizes employers who are committed to protecting their employees while they continuously strive to improve their safety and health management systems and opposes efforts to expand penalties including criminal indictments of individuals. Focusing on increased civil and criminal fines and penalties against employers does not address the primary cause of accidents, injuries, and fatalities on job sites.
- Deploying resources necessary to ensure fair, accurate and complete collection of annual census sampling data and decennial census data and the creation of legislative districts that respect the principles of redistricting including avoiding the drawing of legislative boundaries designed to produce partisan advantages.

The Chamber opposes:

- All unfunded mandates.