

2024 Legislative Priorities

The mission of the Blue Springs Chamber of Commerce is to be the leading resource for business and an effective influential community partner.

As advocates for business, we support initiatives that strengthen the climate for business growth and development and oppose initiatives that unnecessarily burden small business.

We support the efforts of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry in **Missouri 2030: An Agenda to Lead**, which is a 15-year strategic plan for economic growth in Missouri.

Partnering with the Missouri Chamber Federation comprised of more than 195 chambers of commerce and representing more than 75,000 employers throughout the state, we support the Legislative Priorities established by the Missouri Chamber Federation.

Our role is to unite the business community and bring Blue Springs Chamber member employers to the table during important policy discussions.

We will support legislation that:

- Prepares the workforce or removes workforce barriers,
- Streamlines or eliminates unnecessary bureaucracy and business regulation
- Helps businesses connect, and
- Helps Blue Springs' businesses compete.

In addition to the legislative priorities listed above, the Chamber supports the efforts of our four community partner organizations and pledges to support their respective legislative priorities that align with the mission of the Chamber.

City of Blue Springs

Blue Springs R-IV School District

Central Jackson County Fire Protection District

Metropolitan Community College – Blue River

We support legislation that supports, develops and prepares the workforce.

- ✓ A strong education system is key to Missouri's long-term economic health and competitiveness. We support efforts to adequately fund all levels of education from pre K to post-secondary. **(Supported by the Federation)**

This includes:

- Fully funding the Foundation Formula and avoiding any adjustments that would significantly alter the manner in which funds are distributed and without adjusting funding in other budgets also affecting K-12 education.
 - Continuation of the Missouri A+ Program and efforts to maintain or increase participation.
 - Maintaining a competitive investment in public higher education to preserve affordability and produce a well-trained workforce.
 - We would oppose any legislation that would divert revenue from public schools such as open enrollment, scholarship tax credits and vouchers.
 - We would oppose cuts to higher education and support increasing funding levels to postsecondary institutions, including community colleges and universities.
- ✓ We support Real World Learning initiatives and incentivizing programs that partner schools with businesses to produce learning experiences, including but not limited to paid internships, externships and apprenticeship programs that educate teachers and the workforce of tomorrow, especially in high-demand jobs, computer science, cybersecurity, manufacturing, skilled trades, health sciences and STEM fields.
 - ✓ We support a board spectrum approach to upskilling and right skilling our state's workforce to address labor shortages and help businesses' growth. This includes adequately funding our existing workforce programs, ~~like Fast Track and Missouri One Start job training~~, and advocating for new policies that are responsive and flexible to businesses' needs for skilled workers today while also anticipating employment needs of the future. **(Supported by the Federation)**
 - ✓ We support expanded access to apprenticeship programs for any professional or technical apprenticeship. We believe we need to think out of the box and make use of every Missourian.
 - ✓ We support home grown and technological workforce programs to incentivize workers to stay in Missouri and work for a Missouri company.
 - ✓ We support efforts to increase accessibility and affordability of quality childcare for working parents including tax credits for businesses that offer childcare benefits to employees. **(Supported by the Federation)**
 - ✓ We support increased resources for mental health access and availability for public safety and workforce purposes. **(Supported by the Federation)**



We support legislation to streamline and/or eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and business regulation.

- ✓ We oppose government mandates that limit an employer's ability to choose what works best for them and their employees. We support the Missouri Chamber's "Let Business Decide" initiative and support legislation that respects the employers' right to set workplace policies. **(Supported by the Federation)**
- ✓ We support efforts to ease the administrative burden and cost for small businesses including but not limited to maintaining the business tax filing fee structure and on time filing discounts.
- ✓ We support the tenets of intellectual freedom and the nationally well-established selection criteria for choosing appropriate materials for school and public libraries. We oppose the pre-emptive removal, censoring, and labeling of library materials and commend school and public librarians on the excellent work they are doing.
- ✓ We support legislation that would allow library users greater access to electronic materials and require a publisher who offers to license an electronic literary product to the public to also offer to license the product to public libraries in the State on reasonable terms that would enable public libraries to provide library users with access to the electronic literary product.
- ✓ We support efforts to overhaul Missouri's initiative petition process as it affects voters statewide. The sharp increase in the number of initiative petitions filed coupled with confusingly worded ballot language on very complex constitutional proposed changes underscores the need to reform the process.
- ✓ We support legislation that levels the playing field between local hotels and AirB&B's or VRBO's.
- ✓ We support a reasonable and responsible approach to property tax assessment and the rate at which it increases. Property taxes support our community partners such as the City of Blue Springs, Central Jackson County Fire Protection District, Metropolitan Community College, Mid-Continent Public Library and the Blue Springs School District, to name a few. We oppose legislation aimed at defunding these agencies by removing their property tax funding; they provide important services to the business community of Blue Springs.

We support legislation that helps businesses connect with their network through new infrastructure or improvements to existing infrastructure.

- ✓ We support adequate funding and flexibility for MODOT's transportation plan including roadway maintenance. **(Supported by the Federation)**
- ✓ We support legislation that would allocate direct funding for roads and highways within Blue Springs and encourage the City of Blue Springs and the Missouri Department of Transportation to find mutually beneficial funding sources for:
 - I-70 and State Route 7 interchange improvements for volume and safety



- Adequate maintenance and repair for State Route 7 and I70, including the medians
 - Tyler Road Flyover or interchange to provide another north/south crossing over I-70 to relieve congestion on the available routes in Blue Springs and Grain Valley. This is also an economic development opportunity.
- ✓ Public transportation is both a workforce and economic development tool in our communities statewide. We must adequately fund and modernize public transit systems so that they are more accessible and efficient for residents and visitors alike. **(Supported by the Federation)**

We support legislation that helps Blue Springs employers compete.

- ✓ We support law enforcement and first responders including Fire Fighters, Paramedics, EMTs, Police Officers, Prosecutors, Sheriffs and Judges in Blue Springs, Jackson County and other areas, and legislation ensuring their safety and authority, which in turn ensures the safety of Blue Springs businesses, employees and customers.
- ✓ We support an adequate investment in public safety including efforts to recruit and retain employees. We also support efforts to invest in training and state funding to give law enforcement the technology to approach crime prevention more effectively.
- ✓ Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. Therefore, Missouri should increase access to funding and other resources for small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs to help them confidently start, grow, expand, or recover. **(Supported by the Federation)**
- ✓ We support a comprehensive approach to secure Missouri's potential as a technology and innovation hub. **(Supported by the Federation)**
- ✓ We support legal climate reform and the reduction of the statute of limitations for personal injury for Missouri businesses. We support a 2-3 year statute of limitations that is more in line with surrounding states.

The Federation refers to the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry Federation, a partnership created to unify local and state chamber advocacy efforts in the capitol in Jefferson City and in Washington DC. The Missouri Chamber Federation is a network of Missouri's strongest chambers of commerce providing grassroots support on issues that align with local priorities.

