

2019 Legislative Priorities

The mission of the Blue Springs Chamber of Commerce is to promote, develop and facilitate a strong economic environment in which the business community can grow and prosper.

As advocates for business, we support initiatives that strengthen the climate for small 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. We further support their **Workforce 2030 plan**, which identifies Missouri's workforce challenges and finds innovative ways to address them.

Partnering with the Missouri Chamber Federation comprised of more than 130 chambers of commerce and representing more than 70,000 employers throughout the state, we support the Legislative Priorities established by the Missouri Chamber Federation. **Our goal 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:

- Helps businesses connect through infrastructure,
- Prepares the workforce, and
- Helps Blue Springs employers 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



Specifically, we will review and support legislation that:

Helps businesses connect through existing and new infrastructure by:

- ✓ Developing a comprehensive and sustainable transportation funding plan that increases revenues targeted for Missouri's transportation systems including roads, highways, waterways, air, rail and bridges. **(supported by Federation*)**;
- ✓ Expanding access to broadband, including the final mile buildout, to help Missouri meet 21st Century business needs. **(supported by Federation*)**

Prepares the workforce by:

- ✓ Supporting efforts to provide every Missouri child with access to a top-notch education and workforce training.
- ✓ Supporting efforts to adequately fund all levels of education from pre-K to postsecondary specifically:
 - Maintaining competitive investment in public higher education to preserve affordability and produce a well-trained workforce **(supported by Federation*)**
 - Continuing to fully fund the Foundation Formula, 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. Reinstatement of transportation funding for school districts.
 - Opposing any legislation that would divert revenue from public schools such as open enrollment, scholarship tax credits and vouchers.
- ✓ Supporting initiatives 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 and STEM fields.
- ✓ Focusing on programs aimed at improving workforce development and efforts to streamline and update job training programs while promoting job training tax credits for business.

Helps Blue Springs employers compete by:

- ✓ Implementing Internet sales tax reform to level the playing field between online and main street retailers. **(supported by Federation*)**
- ✓ Supporting legislation to strengthen the Missouri Merchandising Practices Act (MMPA) to reduce frivolous lawsuits by classes of individuals who suffered no actual harm. We support reforming the definition of "causation" to require showing that the purportedly deceptive act or practice caused the plaintiff to enter into the transaction and caused loss. We further support reforms to the MMPA that seek to avoid duplicative damage awards, provide fair procedures for class action lawsuits and add consistency between federal and state consumer protections. **(supported by Federation*)**
- ✓ Enacting tort reform needed to balance our courts to serve all parties fairly, including employers by clarifying venue and joinder laws to ensure proper forum and prevent fraudulent misjoinder of claims and limiting the amount of recoverable damages with legislation to reinstate a cap on punitive damages in common law tort cases. **(supported by Federation*)**
- ✓ Supporting a balanced and reasonable approach to environmental and energy regulation that does not stifle innovation and economic growth or add unnecessary and burdensome costs to Missouri businesses.
- ✓ Enacting a statewide prescription drug monitoring program that lowers workforce drug abuse and insurance costs for Missouri employers. **(supported by Federation*)**
- ✓ Supporting law enforcement including Police Officers, Prosecutors, Sheriffs and Judges in Blue Springs, Jackson County and other areas, ensuring their safety and authority, which in turn ensures the safety of Blue Springs businesses, employees and customers.

- ✓ Increase resources for all entrepreneurial and start-up businesses including but not limited to the creation of a co-investment seed capital fund and proof-of-concept fund program to improve the conversion rate of research and development and innovation into entrepreneurial firms and commercially viable products. **(supported by Federation*)**
- ✓ Supporting statewide coverage and funding of the 911 emergency call system.
- ✓ Fostering entrepreneurs and innovation through increasing access and improving technological; advancements, providing incentives for investment in small businesses, increasing financial support for the life sciences industry, or linking venture capitalists with researchers and entrepreneurs, providing a framework to develop and cultivate these relationships.
- ✓ Reforming Missouri's Unemployment Insurance specifically by modifying the legal framework to qualify for unemployment and the state of Missouri should seek methods of repayment that are less costly than the present penalty model.

* The Federation refers to the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry Federation, a PAC formed by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

