

# 2017 COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



COLUMBIA  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

*Engaging Business  
for Community Excellence*





# 2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Since 1905, the Columbia Chamber of Commerce has been a voluntary, member-supported organization of business, industrial and professional people who are dedicated to developing, promoting and maintaining a sound and healthy economic climate for Columbia. The Chamber is a non-profit business organization with more than 1,000 members working together to enhance the Columbia business community.

One way to achieve this mission is by advocating on behalf of our members at the state capitol. The following are the 2017 Legislative Priorities of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

- 1. SUPPORT \$10 MILLION APPROPRIATION FOR FY 18 TO FUND COLUMBIA REGIONAL AIRPORT TERMINAL PROJECT.**
- 2. SUPPORT THE RELEASE OF THE WITHHOLD OF \$2 MILLION APPROPRIATION IN FY 17 AND \$8 MILLION APPROPRIATION IN FY 18 TO EXPAND EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH REACTOR (MURR).**
- 3. SUPPORT A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING PLAN FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO BETTER SUPPORT MISSOURI'S ECONOMIC GROWTH. WITH A FOCUS OF ADVOCATING ON REBUILDING INTERSTATE 70.**
- 4. SUPPORT STATE FUNDING REQUESTS FOR \$491 MILLION IN CORE FUNDING TO HELP ENSURE THE UNIVERSITY CAN CARRY OUT THEIR MISSION.**
- 5. SUPPORT THE MIZZOU STEWARDSHIP MODEL BY DEDICATING REOCCURRING FUNDING OF \$15 MILLION TO ADDRESS THE BACKLOG OF RENOVATION AND REPAIR PROJECTS TOTALING \$748 MILLION ON THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI CAMPUS.**
- 6. SUPPORT FUNDING OF \$53 MILLION FOR THE WATERS HALL AND PLANT GROWTH FACILITIES ON THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI CAMPUS.**

# 2017 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS



## ADMINISTRATION/OTHER ISSUES

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The Columbia Chamber of Commerce supports legislation which would improve efficiencies at the state level at all times. The Chamber further supports legislation that would:

1. Enact a statewide prescription drug monitoring program that lowers workforce drug abuse and insurance costs for employers.



## BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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A Strong pro-business environment is critical for Missouri to remain competitive in a global economy. The Chamber supports initiatives that encourage a healthy business climate in our state including:

1. Support increased funding for the Missouri Technology Corporation in FY 18 of \$30 million.
2. Increase state funding to match federal workforce training dollars to remain competitive and meet expanding employment needs. Examine creating a set aside of the statewide workforce training money for smaller employers to meet local and regional needs.
3. Support the release of the withhold of \$2 million appropriation in FY 17 and \$8 million appropriation in FY18 to expand education and training for the University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR)
4. Align Missouri employment law to federal standards to block frivolous claims against employers.



## EDUCATION

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The Columbia Chamber of Commerce supports appropriate legislative action to stabilize funding for all levels of education and encourages the legislature to continue restoring funding reductions.

### **Administration**

Investing in the educational needs of Columbia's youngest citizens helps to ensure the sustainability of our community and the future needs of our workforce, the Chamber supports legislation that would:

1. Allow public school districts the ability to enter into transportation pilot programs to create cost savings and encourage partnerships within their local communities.
2. Enact authorizing legislation that allows elementary and secondary school districts to create a visiting scholar certificate program. This will allow schools the flexibility to start programs for subjects that are difficult to find qualified teachers. It would also allow school districts to fill essential gaps with the help of business professionals in our community.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Investing in the educational needs of Columbia's youngest citizens helps to ensure the sustainability of our community and the future needs of our workforce, the Chamber supports legislation that would:

1. Restore funding to the Parents as Teachers program to FY10 funding levels.
2. Expand access to pre-K education for Missouri children.
  - A. Continue to support increases to the eligibility levels for the full child care subsidy (although raised to 138% FPL in FY2015, Missouri's eligibility for the full subsidy remains well below the national average of 182% FPL); and
  - B. Allow families to access the Transitional Child Care Subsidy at any point in the income eligibility spectrum, which is up to 215% FPL.
3. Fund early childhood programs as provided by the state statute RSMO 161.215. (Early Childhood Development Education Care Funds).

### **Elementary and Secondary Education**

Education for young people during their more formative years is critical in the creation of a safer community and a competitive workforce for the future. The Chamber supports legislation that would:

1. Fund pre-K through 12 public education above FY 16 appropriation to ensure Missouri's educational system is competitive and capable of effectively preparing tomorrow's workforce.
2. Support the infusion of incentive grants for public schools to develop Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs to encourage students to gain skills and background in those disciplines.
3. Support creative solutions for funding the growing population of children with special needs.

### **Higher Education and the University of Missouri**

Columbia is home to several important higher-learning institutions that help ensure Columbia is ready for jobs for the future. The Chamber supports:

1. State funding requests for \$491 million in core funding to help ensure the University can carry out their Mission.
2. Funding of \$53 million for the Waters Hall and plant growth facilities on the University of Missouri campus.
3. The Mizzou Stewardship Model by dedicating reoccurring funding of \$15 million to address the backlog of renovation and repair projects totaling \$748 million on the University of Missouri campus.



## TAXES & TAX CREDITS

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The Columbia Chamber of Commerce understands the need for tax codes that are fair and equitable to all Missouri citizens. The Chamber supports:

1. Legislation that implements the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement. This legislation would help level the playing field between local retailers and their out-of-state competitors when it comes to use or sales taxes on internet and catalogue purchases made by consumers.



## TRANSPORTATION

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Missouri's natural geographic advantages make it prime for moving economic development forward in our nation. Adequate transportation funding and a formula that reflects the economic strength and development needs are vital to the community. It is essential that we protect the investment, Missourians have already placed into our transportation infrastructure and enact a funding structure which is consistent so that we can plan for future needs.

1. Support a sustainable funding plan for a comprehensive transportation system to better support Missouri's economic growth. Including a focus of advocating on rebuilding Interstate 70.
2. Support \$10 million appropriation for FY 18 to fund Columbia Regional Airport Terminal Project.

## STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

### **State Senator Caleb Rowden, District 19**

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UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**ACCREDITED**®



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