



2021

Columbia Chamber of Commerce Legislative Agenda

*Enhancing the quality of where
we live, learn, work and play*



COLUMBIA
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

*Engaging Business
for Community Excellence*

2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The mission of the Chamber of commerce is to lead our community, drive commerce in our region and advance community and regional collaborations, thereby enhancing the quality of where we live, learn, work and play.

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 over 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 2021 Legislative Priorities of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce.



2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Support the continued stabilization of funding for the University of Missouri to help ensure the University can carry out its Mission.

Support the construction and continued funding of the NextGen Precision Health Institute at the University of Missouri.

Support increased funding for Moberly Area Community College to carry out its Mission and meet the demand of its Early College collaboration with Columbia Public Schools.

Support legislation that enables online sales tax collection by implementing a Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement.

Support a sustainable funding plan for a comprehensive transportation system to better support Missouri's economic growth, with a focus on rebuilding Interstate 70.

2021 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

ADMINISTRATION/OTHER ISSUES

The Columbia Chamber of Commerce continues to support statewide policies that would improve the lives of all Missourians such as legislation that would:

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

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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 by:**

Enacting tort reforms needed to balance our courts

Supporting legislation creating COVID-19 related business liability protections, for those making a good faith effort to protect employees and consumers

Encouraging increased transparency, communication, and engagement between government officials and the business community at-large about mandates that affect the economy

Stabilizing funding for the Missouri Innovation Center

Expanding apprenticeship and other work experience training opportunities.

EDUCATION

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

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.

Support expanded access to early childhood education by advocating for increased funding.

Elementary and Secondary Education

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

Increase funding for Pre-K through 12 public education to ensure Missouri's education system is competitive and capable of effectively preparing tomorrow's workforce.

Support the increased funding and incentive grants for public schools to develop Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs to encourage students to gain relevant skills to meet industry demand for those disciplines.

Higher Education and the University of Missouri

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

Stabilization of funding for the University of Missouri to help ensure the University can carry out its Mission.

Construction and continued funding of the NextGen Precision Health Institute at the University of Missouri that will be the new home for research, clinical talent, and industry partnerships necessary to bring cutting-edge care to Missourians.

Support increased funding for Moberly Area Community College to carry out its Mission and meet the demand of its Early College collaboration with Columbia Public Schools.

Continued funding for the A+ program.

Continued funding for the Missouri Access Grant Program.

TAXES & TAX CREDITS

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

Legislation that enables online sales tax collection by implementing a Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement. This legislation would help level the playing field between local retailers and their out-of-state competitors, while reinvigorating depleted municipal revenues needed to fund vital services such as public safety and infrastructure.

TRANSPORTATION

Columbia's natural geographic advantages in Missouri and the nation make transportation a vital economic driver for our community. Significant state and federal transportation funding, and a robust statewide funding formula is necessary to strengthen economic development and support the workforce. **It is essential that we protect the investment Missourians have already placed into our transportation infrastructure by enacting a funding plan to meet future needs.**

Support a sustainable, long-term funding plan for a comprehensive transportation system to better support Missouri's economic growth, with a focus on rebuilding Interstate 70.

Support regional and state efforts to fund and complete the Rocheport Bridge.

Continue to support regional efforts to complete the Columbia Regional Airport Terminal Project.

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