



# 2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



COLUMBIA  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

# ABOUT THE CHAMBER



The mission of the Columbia 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 Chamber has been a voluntary, member-supported organization of business, industrial and professional people who are dedicated to developing, promoting and maintaining a healthy economic climate for Columbia.

The Chamber is a nonprofit business organization with over 950 members working together to enhance our business community.

One way we achieve this mission is by advocating on behalf of our members at the state capitol, ensuring that our community's concerns stay at the forefront of legislators' minds as they shape policy in our region. The Chamber's legislative priorities provide a framework for our year-round advocacy on behalf of our members.

These priorities are proposed by our Government Affairs committee and approved by our Board of Directors.

For more information on the Chamber's government affairs activities, contact Vice President of External Affairs Lily White at [lily@columbiamochamber.com](mailto:lily@columbiamochamber.com).

# 2023

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Support an increase in core funding for the University of Missouri, the state's premier public research and land-grant university, to ensure they can keep pace with inflation and continue to serve their students, community and the State of Missouri.



Support further increases to Moberly Area Community College's core funding so MACC may continue to effectively and affordably serve the community through workforce development and transfer programs.



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



Support efforts to build a skilled workforce by incentivizing collaboration between the state's public workforce and education systems to increase availability of work-based learning opportunities.



Support innovative solutions to make Missouri a leader in new and emerging technologies and broadband development.

# 2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS



## 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.
- Furthering 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 about mandates that affect the economy.
- Stabilizing funding for the Missouri Innovation Center.
- Expanding apprenticeship and other work experience training opportunities.
- Supporting efforts to build a skilled workforce by incentivizing collaboration between the state's public workforce and education systems to increase availability of work-based learning opportunities.
- Supporting innovative solutions to make Missouri a leader in new and emerging technologies and broadband development.

# EDUCATION

The Chamber supports appropriate legislative action to stabilize funding for all levels of education and encourages the legislature to go above and beyond in reversing recent funding reductions.

## Early Childhood Education

Investing in the educational needs of Columbia's youngest citizens ensures the sustainability of our community and the future of our workforce. The Chamber supports legislation that would:

- Increase funding to expand access to early childhood education.

## Elementary and Secondary Education

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

- Increase funding for Pre-K through 12th grade public education to ensure Missouri's education system is competitive and capable of effectively preparing tomorrow's workforce.
- Increase 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 ensure Columbia is ready for the jobs of the future. The Chamber supports:

- Funding for capital and infrastructure needs at the University of Missouri.
- Growth in core funding for Moberly Area Community College to ensure that they can provide and expand workforce development, technical training and transfer programs.
- Continued funding for the A+ program and the Missouri Access Grant program.
- Continued support for the Show Me Mo Scholars program.





## TAXES & TAX CREDITS

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

- Supports the recovery of businesses and local communities through tax exemptions for businesses that are reasonably maintaining staff and business capabilities through the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 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 made in our transportation infrastructure by enacting a funding plan to meet future needs. The Chamber supports:

- Equitable and minimally invasive construction and completion of the Rocheport Bridge.
- Equitable, prompt and minimally intrusive construction of the Interstate 70 and Highway 63 Connector.
- A sustainable funding plan for a comprehensive transportation system to better support Missouri's economic growth, with a focus on rebuilding and expansion of Interstate 70.
- Regional efforts for air services at the Columbia Regional Airport Terminal.

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# COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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