

2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

THE FOLLOWING ARE STANDING POSITIONS TAKEN THROUGH THE CHAMBER'S BUSINESS ADVOCACY PROCESS. ALL POSITIONS HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BY THE CHAMBER'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Beaufort County needs a more diversified economy. The Chamber supports initiatives that help the region create, attract, retain and expand businesses and industries that generate quality jobs. The Chamber advocates for streamlining the permitting process to reduce the costs of doing business and to eliminate uncertainty that stifles business growth and development. We support utility, internet, and infrastructure improvements to attract new investment and ensure economic development sites are prepared for new business.

TAX REFORM

South Carolina's taxpayers need a modernized, simplified, and more competitive tax system. The Chamber supports reform of the business license tax structure to eliminate double taxation & creation of a single payment processor to reduce burdensome compliance costs. As legislators approach comprehensive tax reform, the Chamber will actively participate with the larger business community in support of a structure that will provide fair, equitable and competitive solution to our taxation challenges.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

The Beaufort Region's businesses need a quality and effective workforce to sustain and enhance business growth and improve the quality of life in our community.

The Chamber supports education reform initiatives to include:

- increased funding for higher education including technical colleges
- increased teacher pay
- ensure that every student graduates from high school prepared for the next step – whether college, technical training, or career.

Ensure that training and retraining programs are aligned to meet the needs of employers based on accurate and regional labor market data. Support employer led "earn and learn" opportunities, including apprenticeships. Incentivize more effective and efficient partnerships between education and workforce systems.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Continue to streamline the permitting process. Provide meaningful input in support of favorable outcomes from the newly established SC Floodwater Commission. Advocate for implementation of traffic flow improvements on Lady's Island, expansion of stormwater infrastructure projects, and the creation of the Jasper Ocean Terminal.

MILITARY

Expand the Tri-Command's \$2.4 billion economic impact by lobbying to maintain and grow our military installations and protect them from encroachment. Work closely with local, state and federal leaders to retain jobs associated with the regions' military installations and to support military families in our community. Support legislation to exempt military retirement pay in South Carolina.

TOURISM

Advance the growth of the \$1.3 billion tourism industry. The Chamber advocates for the renourishment and protection of Hunting Island State Park.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SETTING THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Maintain and grow opportunities for Beaufort County businesses.

Reduce the cost of doing business.

Increase the qualified workforce.

Manage growth and support infrastructure improvements so that the marketability of the area is not threatened.



BEAUFORT, SC

REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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