

**BUSINESS  
ADVOCACY**

**GUIDING  
PRINCIPLES**

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.



**Charleston Metro  
Chamber of Commerce**

**Attainable Housing**

Support incentives and market-driven solutions to increase the housing supply, promote a diversity of housing types and price points region-wide to ensure attainable housing options for everyone in the region.

**Business Creation, Recruitment,  
Retention and Expansion**

Support legislation that helps the region create, attract, retain and expand businesses and industries that generate quality jobs. Advocate for a conducive business climate and balanced regulatory environment.

**Competitive Tax Climate**

Advocate for a state-wide tax climate that ensure fairness, predictability, accountability and compliance while balancing income, property and sales tax levies.

**Education and Workforce Development**

Advocate for the changes necessary in early childhood, K-12 and higher education to prepare all students for the careers of the future and to provide a skilled workforce to support the region's employers.

**Energy**

Support an energy regulatory climate that prioritizes the state's future energy needs with sufficient protections for electric utility ratepayers. Encourage energy generation from a variety of sources to produce reliable, affordable, sustainable electricity for the state's businesses and citizens.

**Environmental Stewardship**

Promote a balanced approach to environmental regulation that embraces responsible stewardship without unreasonably burdening business and industry. The natural environment is important to our region's quality of place, economic competitiveness and overall wellness.

**Healthcare**

Promote workforce wellness and a culture of good health by supporting policies that ensure quality of healthcare while helping reduce healthcare costs for business and expanding access to medical insurance coverage for state residents.

**Hospitality**

Support the investments and workforce needed to ensure the continued vitality of the region's hospitality industry.

**Immigration Reform**

Support comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level that helps businesses attract and retain talented individuals that fuel our globally connected economy.

**International Trade**

Support international trade agreements that are fair, accountable, consistent and that reduce barriers to free and open markets.

**Military and Federal Facilities**

Advance legislative priorities in the South Carolina Military Base Task Force comprehensive plan. Support policies and investments that promote the retention and expansion of military operations and federal facilities in the Charleston region.

**Port Development**

Support the continued growth and expansion of South Carolina's ports.

**Regional Land Use Planning**

Support coordinated decisions among municipalities that align the core values of Choice, Balance and Stewardship as described in the Sustainable Growth Ethic and that promote the efficient use of land essential to economic growth and prosperity.

**Transportation Infrastructure**

Enhance the capacity of our multimodal transportation network including roads, mass transit, pedestrian systems, and freight movement facilities. Support funding to complete every project listed in the Chamber's Infrastructure Priorities report.

2019  
**LEGISLATIVE  
AGENDA**

**STATE PRIORITIES**

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/LEGISLATIVEAGENDA



Charleston Metro  
Chamber of Commerce

## PRIORITY ISSUES

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce urges the General Assembly to pass legislation this session that achieves the following outcomes:

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### State Fiscal Health

- Support reforms to the current South Carolina Retirement System that will eliminate the unfunded liability by closing the state pension system to new employees and moving to a defined contribution plan.
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### Military Base Retention and Expansion

- Support the statewide military retention plan created by the South Carolina Military Base Task Force and fund its implementation.
- Fully exempt military retirement benefits from state income tax.
- Ensure that development of offshore wind energy facilities do not threaten the mission, training or operation of state military installations.
- Change the Military Service, Education and Credentialing Act to make it more efficient for transitioning military families to earn professional licenses in South Carolina.

## COMPETITIVENESS ISSUES

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce encourages the General Assembly to address the following issues that impact economic competitiveness:

### Talent and Education

- Fully fund the Education Finance Act (EFA) as required by state law. This year, an additional \$487 million is needed for the EFA to be fully funded.
- Support state funding for Career Technical Education (CTE) dual-credit programs fostering more youth apprenticeships statewide.

### Entrepreneurship

- Reauthorize the Angel Investor Tax Credit program to maintain an important source of funding for South Carolina start-up enterprises.
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### Talent, Education and Workforce

- Increase base teacher salaries to meet or exceed the southeastern states average by the 2021-22 school year.
  - Support the Higher Education Finance Act to increase funding for state colleges and universities and relieve the tuition burden for South Carolina students.
  - Secure \$25.6 million to renovate Trident Technical College's Berkeley Campus for advanced manufacturing and flexible classroom spaces.
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### Workforce Housing

- Support legislation to facilitate development of workforce attainable housing by allowing builders to easily partner with non-profit organizations on tax exempt projects.
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### Taxes and Regulation

- To meet the needs of rapidly growing school districts, amend millage caps established in Act 388.

### Business Climate

- Re-institute joint and several protections for businesses to reasonably reflect fault in tort actions.
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### Taxes and Regulation

- Streamline the business license fee system and make the process more uniform while minimizing fiscal impacts to municipalities.
- The Chamber supports tax reform efforts to make the tax code a more fair, equitable and competitive system for the business community.