

Licking County Chamber of Commerce

# Public Policy *Statement*



Licking County Chamber of Commerce

# Public Policy *Statement*



The Code of Regulations of The Licking County Chamber of Commerce calls upon the Chamber to achieve the following objectives:

**“Preserving and promoting” the competitive free enterprise system by:**



Creating a better understanding and appreciation of the importance of businessmen and businesswomen and the issues and challenges they face.



Improving private and public awareness of the local, state and national issues that affect the ongoing success of private enterprise.



Fostering greater appreciation of the value of liberal investment of substance and self on behalf of the interests of competitive business.

Within that objective, the Chamber has developed this public policy agenda around the following goals:

- 1) Encourage the enactment of legislation that will create an economic, legislative and regulatory climate conducive to the competitive free enterprise system while opposing legislation that would erode that system.
- 2) Support candidates for public office whose political views align with the Chamber’s relative to the promotion of the free enterprise system and have demonstrated they will energetically support the interests of business as elected officials.

**Economic Development – Investment Incentives Can Encourage Economic Development**

The Chamber will support investment incentives that would stimulate private economic development. Tax inducements, infrastructure assistance, training assistance and other incentives that would encourage economic growth among existing employers and the location of new employers is an investment in the future of our economy.

As such, the Chamber will support legislative and community initiatives that promote such incentives.

Of highest priority to the Chamber are incentives delivered to private entities in the interest of long-term growth of the competitive enterprise system.

**Education and Workforce Quality – Quality Education and Training Lead To Economic Opportunity**

As it pertains to the education of our local workforce, the Chamber shall adopt the informal motto of “Ready for College and Ready for Work”. The chamber will actively support efforts whose goal is to improve the educational quality of our workforce including proposed levy endorsement requests, educational initiatives and education-related legislation.

The Chamber will evaluate the potential effects of any initiatives as they relate to the preparation of students for the challenges of college and/or work.



### **Energy and Environment – A Proper Balance Between Environmental Initiatives and Energy Demands**

In order for economic growth to occur, business needs access to affordable resources. However, the Chamber also understands the balance that must be struck between energy costs and long-term environmental health.

### **Health Care - Affordable Health Care for Business and Individuals**

The Chamber supports market-based solutions to the country's health care crisis to make private and public health care more affordable and accessible without placing undue burdens on employers, government or select individuals.

### **Infrastructure – Up-to-date Infrastructure Is An Important Economic Development Tool**

The Chamber will place a high priority on the support issues that benefit the maintenance of infrastructure. It is the Chamber's position that modern and well-maintained infrastructure (roads, bridges, rail, water, sewer, etc.) can be a strong economic development tool. Conversely, a poorly maintained infrastructure detracts from the economic attractiveness of our community and will ultimately deter economic development.

The Chamber will support the prioritization of tax funds toward infrastructure repair and oppose efforts at all levels of government to balance budgets at the cost of infrastructure maintenance.

### **Legal Reform – Ensure That Ohio's Legal Climate Is Clear, Objective and Based In Common Sense**

The Chamber supports a fair, equitable and predictable legal climate for business. This includes private rights of action for employers to cure product defects and a willingness to examine less punitive solutions to avoid harmful legal actions related to federal economic recovery efforts. The Chamber believes that employees have a right to private ballots when considering collective bargaining units. The Chamber supports efforts to reduce inconsistencies between state and federal employment laws. The Chamber also supports efforts to maintain the solvency of the state's unemployment compensation trust fund by promoting measures that return unemployed workers to the workforce.

### **Regulation – Reduce Regulation On Business To Improve Economic Growth**

The Chamber believes that fewer regulations lead to more economic growth and prosperity. The Chamber is a committed advocate for a commonsense 21st century regulatory climate that is transparent, consistent, flexible and efficient. Regulations should be considered on the basis of an understandable cost/benefit analysis.

### **Taxation – Simplify and Lower Taxes To Create Economic Development**

The Chamber supports tax-related legislation that will make Ohio competitive with other states. It is the Chamber's position that a simplified, competitive tax system will create economic opportunity and stimulate the creation of business and jobs within our state.

### **Tax Abatements – Tax Abatement Is An Investment in Our Economic Future**

Barring targeted business tax reductions, the Chamber strongly supports the use of time-limited tax abatements to ease the burden on developing and newly locating businesses in the County as an investment in the future of Licking County's economic base.

### **Entrepreneurship** – The Private Enterprise System

The private enterprise system is a pillar of our economic success. As such, the Chamber supports streamlined regulations that provide appropriate protection while encouraging business development and innovation. The Chamber will advocate for innovative approaches to reforming the small group health care market that will lower costs while providing adequate access to health care resources. The Chamber also supports energy initiatives that will provide lasting supplies at competitive prices while encouraging energy-efficient decisions and conservation.

### **Transportation** – Fully fund needed road and transportation maintenance costs.

Efforts to fund road and transportation system maintenance have fallen behind at a state and local level. Meanwhile, a critical factor in economic development efforts remains the quality and maintenance of our transportation infrastructure. The Chamber supports funding to properly maintain our roads, bridges and rail lines.

### **Workers' Compensation** – Create an affordable insurance system that rewards safe work places

The Chamber supports a viable Workers' Compensation system that encourages alternative programs such as group rating to incentivize safer workplaces, reduce workplace injuries and ensure that Ohio's Workers' Compensation system is fully funded. The Chamber will also promote fund stability through support of transparency, accountability and responsible investments in the Workers' Compensation Fund. The Chamber supports changes that will contain costs through employer incentives to manage and defend claims.



#### *our mission:*

The Licking County Chamber of Commerce is a business organization that supports our member businesses and advances the economic well being of the Licking County community.