



2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR BUSINESS





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ARIZONA CHAMBER EXECUTIVES: LEADERS IN PUBLIC POLICY

Arizona Chamber Executives (ACE) represents the leaders of chambers of commerce across the state of Arizona. The ACE membership reflects the diverse communities that make up our great state. Each year, our membership collaborates to establish a legislative agenda for business. This agenda provides our organizations guiding principles for advocacy that best represent Arizona's businesses.

Members of ACE draft the legislative agenda, which is presented to the broader membership at our annual conference. The membership reviews and provides input, ensuring that each community's voice is heard and represented. The membership then votes to approve the agenda and establishes it as ACE's official priorities for the upcoming legislative session.

Throughout the year, ACE members and leaders participate in weekly policy calls to monitor legislation and determine necessary advocacy efforts. This public policy process is open to all members of the organization, ensuring that each Chamber is represented.

ACE members follow these principles when advocating for our member businesses at the local, state, and federal levels. Our objective is to create and maintain a regulatory environment in Arizona that allows businesses to grow and thrive.

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STATE ISSUES

Education

- Advocate for financial investments for P-20 education and public higher education programs, including the New Economy Initiative, to ensure Arizona has the qualified workforce it needs in the 21st Century.
- Support a modernization and simplification of the state's P-20 funding system, with an emphasis on encouraging the replication of high performing educational models, especially those in low-income areas and rural areas.
- Support funding and policies that ensure Arizona students and job creators have robust career and workforce pipeline options with an emphasis on support for JTED and CTE programming.
- Support career pathway and related training initiatives and programs within the Arizona@Work program aimed at furthering adult education and retraining an aging workforce, including support for community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and post-secondary education.
- Support innovative solutions for increasing student access to technology to help improve student result scores, as well as further advance remote-learning technology at all grade levels.
- Continue to support Arizona's tradition of pro-school choice policies that include accountability measures.
- Support modernization of the K-12 and community college expenditure limitation formulas to better align with current and future revenue and expenditure forecasts.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- Support infrastructure projects that maximize job creation and investment in Arizona's statewide interstate system, rural state highways and ports of entry.
- Support statewide and regional transportation solutions to address transportation funding challenges that focus on a "user pays" model that incorporates long-term, forward-thinking, and sustainable funding streams.
- Advocate for legislation, regulation and policies that recognize the electric power grid and all other natural resources and utility infrastructure delivery systems as assets requiring consistent maintenance, improvement, and support through investments by all users.
- Support additional digital connectivity opportunities and targeted investment throughout all of Arizona where necessary, including broadband through all available funding sources at the state and federal level.
- Support all utility infrastructure in our state including electricity, water, sewer, natural gas, solar/alternative energy, and communications.
- Oppose efforts to limit or eliminate access to natural gas.
- Maintain electrical grid strength statewide allowing for adequate and improved generating capacity.
- Support policies and investments that promote reliable electric service that emphasizes resource adequacy, price stability, and consumer protection as a foundation of Arizona's continued economic success.
- Support the use of Securitization, a financial tool used to refinance utility assets, when appropriate, to save residential and business customers money.
- Advocate that State Lake Improvement Funds will continue to be distributed appropriately on a perpetual basis and not be swept for future budget shortfalls.

Taxation

- Oppose accounting gimmicks and fund sweeps as a budget balancing mechanism, especially related to transportation infrastructure.
- Support a taxation system that is globally competitive, fair, consistent, easily administered, and equitable that will attract new investments and bring jobs to Arizona.
- Work with interested parties to come up with continued reforms to Arizona's public pension systems to reduce unfunded liabilities.
- Conform to federal income tax changes by January 31st of each year and discourage changes on income tax deadlines that require annual action from the State Legislature.
- Support of continuous improvement of Department of Revenue policies & procedures to ensure tax collection accuracy, management, and system ease of use by taxpayers.

Legal & Regulatory Affairs

- Support free market enterprises and the right of business to determine wage and benefit policies without undue government interference.
- Oppose government burdens on private workplace management including regulations on the ability to hire, terminate and retain employees or obtain licensure or business ownership.
- Maintain a competitive regulatory environment that provides timeliness and certainty for businesses without unduly burdensome regulations on business owners.
- Oppose OSHA and other government entities unilaterally expanding the definition of "safe work environment" to include contact with pandemic/contagious illnesses.
- Advocate for business and community pandemic/contagious illness liability protection measures at both the state and federal level.
- Support continuance for employers being "held harmless" for pandemic/contagious illness related unemployment claims.
- Support legislation that protects businesses from frivolous lawsuits.
- Support Arizona's national image through sound legislation including modernizing policies to protect Arizona's diverse community and population.
- Continue to advocate for a fair and transparent initiative process that reflects the will of all Arizonans while respecting the constitutional authority and duties of the Legislature.
- Protect the business community's ability to engage in political speech.
- Support reauthorization of state voter-approved initiatives every ten years.

Economic Prosperity

- Support coordinated efforts to brand Arizona as a favorable environment for tourism, business location, expansion, and job creation, including film and multimedia production.
- Strengthen Arizona's economy by encouraging increased public-private partnerships.
- Increase the funding level for tourism promotion for the State of Arizona, including the use of alternative funding methods and encourage the office to seek a chamber of commerce or other qualified private non-profit organization as the first option designation as a destination marketing organization (DMO).
- Advocate for policies that encourage economic development throughout all of Arizona.
- Support market driven solutions to providing housing solutions that are affordable and sustainable, including improvements to the zoning process where feasible.
- Support clean energy initiatives and policies that bolster economic growth through the advancement and deployment of new and existing technologies.

FEDERAL ISSUES

Regulatory

- Oppose regulatory efforts by the federal government that disparately and disproportionately impact Arizona, while supporting efforts to streamline regulations and ensure that Arizona's distinctive characteristics are reflected.
- Preserve a business owner's ability to manage their workplace and workforce without expanded federal intrusion, including FMLA mandates.
- Advocate for annual finalization of the federal tax code by November 30th of that tax year.
- Promote policies that support trade that protect Arizona's competitive interests.
- Advocate for health care legislation that removes mandates on small business, provides stability and certainty for the individual insurance marketplace and hospital systems, protects the low-income and vulnerable, and does not cost shift expenses to the state or businesses and does not impede the private market.
- Support policies that allow chambers to provide group health plans to their members through the association health plan model.
- Support policies that continue to allow chambers to provide association retirement plans to their members.
- Oppose efforts to increase wage and benefit laws that are higher than the state minimums.
- Oppose legislation that unfairly shifts the balance of the federal workplace regulatory structure and limits employer rights, increases collective bargaining, and increases employer liability.

Military Assets

- Work with Arizona's congressional delegation and business community to promote Arizona's military installations and emphasize the ability of these installations to take on new missions and expand economic development.

Natural Resources

- Support legislation that would require the federal government to enter an agreement with the state or any municipality that offers non-federal funds to reopen and temporarily operate public lands including national parks, national monuments and national recreation areas during a government shutdown.
- Support comprehensive state and federal solutions that protect Arizona's present and future water supply for sustained economic development for all affected industries.
- Support the Northern Arizona Forest Fund (NAFF) and National Forest Foundation (NFF) to help protect the state's forests and water supply through programs designed to improve forest health and water quality in the Salt and Verde River watersheds.
- Support allocating a percentage of funds currently marked for suppression of forest fires and wildland fires to prevention of forest and wildland fires.
- Support state management of federal lands during forest and wildland fires.
- Oppose efforts to designate land as national monuments.

- Support policies that ensure the Colorado River remains accessible for recreational watercraft.
- Protect Arizona's Colorado River allotment and the ability to effectively manage the allotment, including maintaining the reliability of those supplies for current and future use and include representation from Arizona's Colorado River communities in the process.
- Support policies and processes for research and development of alternative water source options (desalinization, wastewater treatment, excess transfers, etc.).
- Support innovative research for water storage solutions such as the Bartlett Dam Project proposed by the Verde River Sediment Mitigation Study.
- Support policies that advocate for Arizona's mining and agriculture industries.

Border Issues/Immigration

- Continue to support comprehensive federal immigration reform that encourages economic growth including ability to hire qualified talent legally and efficiently.
- Support federal reimbursement for states that incur higher costs for education, health care, and incarceration as a result of undocumented immigration.
- Support a dialogue with the Mexican government to expand and modernize U.S.-Mexico ports of entry that advocates for improvement, modernization, and increased security measures at the border.

Endorsed By

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Lake Havasu Area Chamber of Commerce
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