

2017 State Legislative Agenda



seattle metropolitan chamber of commerce

The Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce is the region's largest independent business and employer association. We seek an economically vibrant and globally competitive Seattle region where businesses can flourish and everyone has the opportunity to succeed and to access a thriving quality of life.

In 2017, the Chamber will advocate for the following state policy improvements to advance economic prosperity, ensure a vital business environment, and build sustainable and healthy communities in our region.

EDUCATION

- **Any new investments should align with and advance progress toward the state's two achievement goals: 100% high school graduation and 70% post-secondary education by 2023.**
- Support early education, specifically the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Resolve *McCleary*
 - State funding should be directed at improved outcomes for students, including:
 - Give every K-12 student access to computer science education
 - Increase access to dual-credit opportunities
 - Expand career connected learning through programs like Seattle Public Schools' Career Technical Education
 - Increase student support services
 - Increase beginning teachers' salaries
 - Fund dual language programs
- To better support post-secondary education (certificates, apprenticeships, two-year, four-year and graduate programs), the state should:
 - Make progress on restoring state share of funding of higher education to historic levels
 - Fully fund State Need Grant
 - Maintain full funding for College Bound Scholarship
 - Support MESA funding, apprenticeships, and 4-year STEM offerings
 - Expand work-based learning through state work study and career-connected learning opportunities
 - Maintain support for Washington State Opportunity Scholarship

TAX AND REGULATORY POLICIES

- Ensure tax and regulatory policies that enhance Washington's economic competitiveness
- Maintain Washington state's aerospace incentives and other key tax incentives

WORKFORCE POLICIES

- Ensure that labor policies benefit both employees and employers, are simple to implement, and seamlessly integrate with existing definitions, laws, and jurisdictions
- Any proposals to legislate paid family leave or achieve gender equity should be consistent with principles developed by the Chamber's Gender & Workforce Policy Task Force and make the business community stronger.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- Work with Affordable Washington, a broad-based coalition, to support an increased and diverse supply of housing. Key elements include:
 - Preservation Tax Exemption
 - Housing Trust Fund
 - Document Recording Fee

HUMAN SERVICES

- Make progress on restoring funding for mental health services and substance abuse services

TRANSPORTATION

- Support tools that allow Sound Transit to expedite delivery of the ST3 package

REVENUE

- If the legislature pursues new revenue, it must be broad-based, ensure that all existing revenue has been used effectively, and should align with the goals articulated in this agenda.
- Any new revenue sources must be evaluated to understand more fully how they impact Washington's competitive tax burden relative to other states.
- Our state's revenue framework should support the broad needs of Washington residents, while also ensuring the most favorable possible climate for innovation and entrepreneurship, especially in comparison to other states/regions with high-performing innovation ecosystems.