

2011

OKLAHOMA CITY/TULSA JOINT LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMY & TAXES

American Indian Cultural Center & Museum / Oklahoma Museum of Music and Popular Culture

The Chambers support maximizing private donation by supporting a state bond issue for capital investment in the American Indian Cultural Center and the Oklahoma Museum of Music and Popular Culture in addition to other cultural, historical and entertainment venues in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa regions.

Bioscience

The Chambers will oppose all efforts to unreasonably restrict the continued development of the state's bioscience and research programs and will support efforts to foster an environment that is conducive to further research.

EDGE Endowment Fund

The Chambers advocate protecting the EDGE (Economic Development Generating Excellence) endowment fund from being eliminated or borrowed from, and support identifying a permanent funding source that will ultimately allow the EDGE Fund to reach \$1 billion.

Lawsuit Reform

The Chambers support additional lawsuit reform, including legislation to create an Indemnity Fund to pay for non-economic damage awards in excess of \$400,000 in those negligence cases where the cap is imposed.

Liquor Laws

The Chambers will work with all significant stakeholders to examine the consequences and benefits of updating the state's liquor laws, including allowing the sale of wine in grocery stores.

OCAST

The Chambers support funding for programs currently managed by OCAST (Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology).

EDUCATION

Due Process Reform

The Chambers support removing restrictions on a school district's ability to terminate bad or low performing employees, as well as those who engage in inappropriate behavior and actions, by removing the right to a trial de novo, and allow for accountable, at-will employment in Oklahoma schools.

Transformation Education Reform

The Chambers believe Oklahoma should create an in-state competitive

program that allows local districts to apply for funding of new and innovative programs that will improve performance and accountability.

Energy

The Chambers support policies that encourage energy development in a regulatory environment that creates more business certainty, promotes job creation and encourages economic growth for all domestic energy sources.

The Chambers support increasing CNG (compressed natural gas) infrastructure statewide.

HEALTHCARE

The Chambers oppose new health insurance mandates and liability that will undermine an employer's ability to provide quality health insurance at a reasonable cost to employers.

The Chambers support the repeal of state pre-emption laws in an effort to increase the wellness of Oklahomans and decrease the cost of health care.

The Chambers support closing the tax loophole on smokeless tobacco to fully fund the state's physician student loan repayment program.

The Chambers advocate for the funding of the medical home model for primary healthcare as provided by the Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers (like Morton and Community Health Connection); support residency training at the FQHC's (Teaching Health Centers Program) and National Health Service Corps Expansion to cover medical school loan payback through FQHC service.

Provider Fee

The Chambers support a Hospital Provider Fee to allow the state to obtain the (approximately) 3:1 federal matching dollars necessary to

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TULSA METRO CHAMBER

fund the state's Medicaid program, to achieve the Upper Payment Limit (UPL) for hospitals and to provide durable, consistent and predictable funding for Medicaid and indigent care providers.

IMMIGRATION

The Chambers oppose illegal immigration. The Chambers support an improved immigration process that promotes the ability of students and workers/employees to enter the United States lawfully and allows employers to accurately verify the status of employees through a federal database.

The Chambers believe that immigration policy should be set by the federal government and support comprehensive reform at that level. Accordingly, the Chambers oppose additional immigration reform at the state level.

LAWSUIT REFORM

The Chambers support major lawsuit reform, including:

- Elimination of joint and several liability
- Hard cap on non-economic damages
- Class action lawsuit reform
- Product liability reform

TAX CREDITS AND INCENTIVES

Aerospace Engineer Tax Credit

The Chambers support reinstatement of the aerospace and other effective tax incentives. The Chambers support the legislature's protection of effective tax credits and elimination of ineffective tax credits through a process of annual review.

Effective Incentives and Credits

The Chambers support incentives to attract new businesses to Oklahoma. The Chambers will guard against attempts to change, sunset or repeal existing business incentives such as the Quality Jobs Act, the 21st Century Quality Jobs Act, the Ad Valorem Reimbursement Fund and the Quality Investment Act. The Chambers support additional transparency on incentive and tax credit programs to generate increased confidence and bring accountability to those programs.

TRANSPORTATION

The Chambers support recent efforts made by the state legislature to secure transportation funding and will seek to preserve and protect ODOT's 8-year plan.

Gilcrease Expressway

The Chambers support the building of the Gilcrease Expressway and bridge through any funding mechanism available in order to expedite this long overdue transportation system; a partnership with the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation may be beneficial.

Existing Road Funding

The Chambers will work to defend all existing road funding; prevent any diversion of monies; and support increased funding for transportation by

developing an adequate, comprehensive funding strategy to broaden the sources of funds and increase the total amount going to transportation statewide.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION REFORM

Incremental change to the workers' compensation system in Oklahoma in the past, while producing some benefit to Oklahoma employers, has not solved the problem of competitiveness in economic development.

The Chambers support an overall restructuring of the state's workers' compensation system to:

- Produce lower cost to Oklahoma employers.
- Be more responsive to injured workers in a spirit of fairness.
- Streamline the process to eliminate delay and waste.

FEDERAL

Tax Cut Extension

The Chambers support extension of the federal tax reductions enacted in 2001 and 2003.

Card Check Opposition

The Chambers support the right of workers to voluntarily join unions under fair and democratic rules. They oppose initiatives that would upset the balance of the National Labor Relations Act, including union-backed proposals to abolish secret ballot elections in favor of card check majorities for union recognition. (Employee Free Choice Act, EFCA or "card check").

Cap and Trade Opposition

The Chambers oppose cap and trade legislation, a carbon tax, or similar "carbon" legislation that leads to higher energy costs for businesses and results in private sector job losses.

EPA Emission Standards

The Chambers support the adoption of a more reasonable time frame for the implementation of the new more stringent ozone emission standard.

High Speed Rail

The Chambers support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) feasibility study of high speed/commuter rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Intermodal Transportation

The Chambers support the development of an intermodal transportation system, including streets, transit, express buses, ports, airports, and rail.