



**Greater North County Chamber of Commerce,  
Maryland Heights Chamber of Commerce,  
North County Incorporated Regional Development Association,  
North County Chamber of Commerce,  
Northwest Chamber of Commerce**

**2010 North County Legislative Agenda**

**Economic Development**

**Economic Development Tax Credits**

We support the expansion of proven tax credits that leverage private investment and stimulate employment and economic growth for our region.

We support the use of tax credits for job retention, as well as job attraction activities and the elimination of sunsets and caps on proven tax credit programs.

We oppose efforts to reduce the effectiveness of proven tax credit programs, including subjecting them to the annual appropriations process.

We oppose efforts to cap or reduce the Missouri Historic Preservation Tax Credit, and maintain its transferability.

**Job Training**

We support restoration and enhancement of state appropriations for job training and exploration of avenues to make programs more accessible.

**Small Business and Entrepreneurial Growth**

We encourage policies that stimulate an entrepreneurial culture and enhance the growth of small businesses; policies that provide direct assistance to small businesses with high-growth potential, such as grants for professional services, greater access to low-interest loans for start-up and expansion capital or state matching grants. We encourage greater access to markets for minority and women business enterprises in the public and private sectors.

**Redevelopment**

We support initiatives to spur redevelopment efforts in economically distressed areas, such as increasing direct funding and tax credits for Brownfield cleanup.

We support meaningful liability reform for Brownfield sites to encourage their turnover to a productive use.

**Energy and the Environment**

We support appropriate funding to maintain effective state environmental programs, without unduly taxing businesses.

**Sustainable Development**

We support legislation that creates regional solutions and partnerships to reduce neighborhoods in downward transition.

We support legislation that provides for a rebuilding and conservation of assets, while guarding against policies that cannibalize St. Louis County, and imprudently use taxes to unnecessarily develop large areas that cause conflict with the sustainability of already established communities.

## **Education**

### **Primary & Secondary Funding**

We support appropriations for public schools sufficient to fund the Foundation Formula and categorical programs and support reducing the number of years to phase in the full funding of the new formula.

We oppose further mandating of programs until all current programs are fully funded.

We support legislation mandating fair and accurate property assessments.

We support legislation to offer greater financial assistance to local education agencies to improve the quality of and access to pre-kindergarten education programs for all students.

We also endorse the consolidation of responsibility for early childhood education programs to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

We support continuing and expanding the "Parents as Teachers" program.

We oppose programs that would divert public funding into private institutions and be detrimental to our public school systems.

### **Autonomy**

We support the local autonomy of school districts. Local school districts are in the best position to determine the most effective use of funds and other resources.

We oppose any effort to impose new restrictions upon the authority of local school districts.

We oppose legislation that would erode local control of public schools, legislation that would destroy teacher associations, and that fails to support libraries, teacher training, health services, transportation, or school support staff. The State should not override the fiscal oversight of our local Boards of Education by mandated spending of local tax dollars.

### **Charter Schools**

We support limiting charter schools to the districts in which they presently exist until such time as accreditation standards and rigorous academic standards are developed for these schools so that they become viable alternatives to public schools.

### **Higher Education**

#### **Funding**

St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and the University of Missouri-St. Louis play a key role in the vitality and economic development of our area. Higher education, through its workforce training and skills development programs, is an important partner in our region's efforts in developing plant and life science companies, and expanding manufacturing and engineering interests.

We support secure funding, through appropriation or bonding, for renovation of Benton-Stadler science complex, and a new facility for the Colleges of Nursing and Optometry at UM-St. Louis.

We support the final \$1.9 million adjustment to the University of Missouri-St. Louis' base budget to address long-standing system-wide equity issues.

We support a plan to provide consistent funding for capital funding for maintenance and repair of buildings and equipment.

## **Healthcare**

### **MoHealthNet**

We support this public/private partnership, which must maintain the safety net for those who cannot afford health insurance, such as those with pre-existing conditions who are ineligible for health insurance, the disabled and mental health parity. This legislation should restore other MoHealthNet funding for medical equipment and supplies. The program should adequately reimburse health providers, including dentists. This would increase access to care. The availability of primary care physicians to this population will promote preventive and long-term care, alleviating the use of hospital emergency rooms for non-emergency care. Long-term, this would create a "healthier state."

We support adequate state funding for MoHealthNet to enhance the capture of available federal matching funds and ensures adequate and timely Medicaid reimbursement to providers.

We oppose legislation shifting the cost of the uninsured businesses and health insurance mandates that undermine the ability of employers to provide high-quality health insurance at a reasonable cost.

We support legislation that assures full, affordable and comprehensive access to health insurance, as well as informed choice of doctors, hospitals and insurance plans.

### **Adult Outpatient Therapy**

We support the restoration of funding for adult outpatient therapies. State FY2006 budget removed from Medicaid all funding for adult outpatient therapies. We ask that funds be restored for State FY 2010 through a regular appropriation. Without outpatient therapy, many people are unable to restore their quality of life, mobility, and independence.

### **Certificate of Need**

We oppose repealing the Certificate of Need (CON) for new health care facilities. Repealing the CON would encourage niche providers who only serve a limited segment of the medical market that focus on the most profitable services, such as uncomplicated outpatient surgeries for individuals with insurance, medical imaging, etc. Niche providers focus on only the most profitable hospital services, attacking hospitals' major revenue streams and making it difficult to sustain other critical but unprofitable services, such as emergency rooms and trauma centers.

### **Trauma Centers**

We support additional funding for trauma centers to maintain high-quality healthcare services for North St. Louis County.

### **Healthcare Coverage**

We support pooled-purchasing associations to offer self-insured coverage under ERISA to small businesses, individuals, the self-employed, and municipalities.

We support tax deductions for individuals who pay their own health insurance premiums.

### **Home Care Council**

We encourage the State to monitor accountability and quality of the home care council created by Proposition B.

## **Transportation**

### **Funding**

We support adequate Missouri transportation funding and a formula that reflects the economic strength and development needs of the St. Louis region and encourage the consideration of economic development and job creation impact when funding future projects.

We oppose efforts to redistribute money away from the St. Louis region.

We encourage the emphasis on maintenance of existing infrastructure.

We support maintaining St. Louis's representation on the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

We support various forms of user fees be considered as one source of new transportation funding.

### **Transit**

We support a dedicated, reasonable, and equitable source of State funding for public transportation.

### **Logistics and Distribution**

We support funding for Lambert -St. Louis International Airport improvements and infrastructure to enhance the region's logistics and distribution capabilities, with an emphasis on international cargo facilities.

## **General Issues**

### **Revision of Term Limits for State Legislators**

We support the elimination of term limits or increasing the number of terms legislators may serve. Term limits can erode institutional knowledge and lead to undue influence by lobbyists for the continually changing members of the House and Senate. Legislators are limited to a maximum of eight years in each chamber. An additional four years in each chamber for legislators would be a welcome change.

### **Photographic Enforcement**

We oppose the diversion of any funds away from a municipality, which were gained through the photographic enforcement of stop light violations.

### **Predatory Lending**

We support legislation establishing that the Missouri Attorney General should have increased responsibility to investigate and take legal action against predatory lenders, such as payday and title loan companies. In addition, legislation should allow cities to impose limits on the number of payday loan companies or, if desired by the community, to ban these operations entirely.

### **Tax Structure Review**

We seek a tax structure review due to structural deficits caused by an out-of-date revenue system. Missouri's capacity to fund services is out of balance because the revenue system has not been modified for decades in what it taxes and how it taxes. While Missouri is not unique in having an antiquated revenue system, it is distinctive in being one of the state's most at risk for a widening gap between revenue and expenditures due to its outmoded system. One of the structural issues the State should address is the expansion of electronic retail sales and the need to adapt the revenue system to collect taxes on these sales.

**Taxation for Local Governments**

We support maintaining the existing sales tax authority in the statutes. Extending the authority for sales taxes to other government entities will lead to a very high sales tax rate. The legislature should maintain the clear delineation that sales taxes should be primarily maintained as a municipal revenue source and should oppose further incursions by other taxing entities that currently use other types of taxes.

**Tax System**

We support tax relief for senior citizens by increasing limits through the current circuit breaker program.

**Telecommunications**

We support policies that encourage investment in technology infrastructure and promote customer choice. We support policies that establish reasonable regulatory treatment of all providers of telecommunications and video services to enhance infrastructure investment and maximize customer benefits from competition.

**For an electronic version of this document go to any of the following websites**

**[greaternorthcountychamber.com](http://greaternorthcountychamber.com)**

**[mhcc.com](http://mhcc.com)**

**[NorthStLouisCounty.com](http://NorthStLouisCounty.com)**

**[northwestchamber.com](http://northwestchamber.com)**