

**Business Climate**

Advocate for a reduction and elimination of unfunded mandates that restrict operating a profitable business.

Oppose policy that does not balance employer and employee interests.

Support regulatory reform to ensure that government is creating and implementing policy that is responsive to customer needs.

Monitor the local, state and national economy by partnering with appropriate officials to address economic concerns.

Encourage our federal legislators to focus attention on reducing the federal deficit.

**Minority Owned Enterprise**

Support the growth of minority owned enterprises in the region.

Continue advocacy for government funding to support local programs and enterprises such as the Akron Urban League and the Minority Business Development Organization.

**CREATE THE CAPACITY TO SUCCEED**

The Greater Akron Chamber seeks to unite and leverage greater Akron's business, civic, academic and political leadership for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing a globally competitive region.

**Advocacy**

Review and advocate local tax issues and levies that benefit business development, community improvement and quality of life.

**Quality of Life**

Support the balancing of business, social and recreational needs of the community that contributes to greater Akron's exceptional quality of life.

**THE GREATER AKRON CHAMBER GRACIOUSLY THANKS THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THE CHAMBER'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS:**



**OUR MISSION:**

To drive economic development and prosperity for the people of the Greater Akron region.



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2009 – 2010  
PUBLIC POLICY  
ADVOCACY  
AGENDA



## 2009-2010 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chamber is pleased to announce its 2009-10 Public Policy Agenda. The agenda serves as a framework in supporting the Chamber's mission to drive economic development and prosperity for the people of the Greater Akron Region. The Public Policy Agenda mirrors the Advance Akron Initiative priorities:

- Grow Greater Akron
- Invest in human capital
- Improve perceptions
- Revitalize our physical assets
- Enhance value for small business
- Create the capacity to succeed

The Chamber will proactively work with our decision makers at the local, state and federal levels to impact decisions that will positively affect the business climate of Northeast Ohio. With the help of our members and partners, we can utilize the framework for guiding responsible public policy decisions that foster economic growth, job creation and a strong quality of life for our communities.

### GROW GREATER AKRON

The Greater Akron Chamber seeks to grow Greater Akron by broadening and strengthening innovative economic development efforts to sustain job growth and increase local wealth in the short and long term.

### Business Friendly Environment

Continue to support public policy that demonstrates the Greater Akron Region is a favorable locale to attract and support expansion and investment opportunities.

### Entrepreneurship

Work with local and regional partners to support technology transfer programs and the creation of startup tech businesses.

With the help of our regional partners, pursue state and federal funding opportunities and policy changes that support investment and innovation. Opportunities on the state level could be pursued through the Third Frontier Program.

### Innovation Centers

Promote policies and funding that enhance the expansion and retention of local industry clusters such as advanced materials (metal, polymers and liquid crystals); healthcare (biomedical); advanced energy; instruments, controls; and electronics and service (finance, insurance, real estate and housing) as an integral part of our economic growth strategy.

The BioInnovation Institute will pioneer the next generation of life-enhancing and life-saving innovation for the 21st Century.

The Chamber will support the Institute's goal of raising \$120 million over the next ten years to become a world class facility. Support will include advocacy for the increase of research and development funding for universities and healthcare partners from the state and federal government.

### Tax Reform

Support pro-growth tax policies that preserve global competitiveness and create a tax climate that fosters business development to invest in new products, equipment and employees.

Continue to monitor the implementation of the state Commercial Activity Tax (CAT) and local taxes as they pertain to business.

### Healthcare

Continue to support market-driven solutions to control growth in healthcare costs and to foster competition in the private health insurance market.

Advocate for fair and equitable reimbursement plans for healthcare providers ensuring their continued growth in the region.

Support public/private sustainable solutions to increase citizen access to health insurance coverage and decrease the number of uninsured.

### INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The Greater Akron Chamber seeks to develop our workforce to meet the needs of businesses by enhancing the education, training and workforce development programs of the public school system, higher education institutions and other available resources.

### Workforce Development

Support the attraction and retention of a talented workforce. The Chamber will continue to collaborate with partners in efforts to advocate for policies and funding that will build a diverse and skilled regional workforce including apprentice, co-op, internship and skills retraining programs.

Support programs that align employee skills to business needs by supporting public and private efforts to bridge employment disparity.

Continue advocacy leadership on enhancing the urban core to retain and attract emerging talent and young professionals.

### Education (P-16)

Continue to support the National Inventors Hall of Fame School...Center for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Learning middle school.

Support the creation of a STEM based high school to compliment the STEM middle school.

Continue to work with community leadership on creating a program to fund a post-secondary scholarship program.

Support policy to transform our education system to develop students to meet the challenges of employment in a 21st century economy. The system would include implementation of ACT testing for all high students and curriculum alignment at all levels of education.

Encourage communities, schools and governments to work together to fund public education for the economic success of the region.

### REVITALIZE OUR PHYSICAL ASSETS

The Greater Akron Chamber seeks to collaborate with the public and private sectors to continue the revitalization of our urban core and other key tangible assets that will enhance our sense of place and quality of life.

### Transportation

**Air:** Support Akron-Canton Airport's 2018 capital improvement plan which will make necessary upgrades to retain their low-fare advantage and retain and expand national service providers and flights. Advocate for international service for the region.

### Surface and Multi-Modal Transportation:

Advocate for transportation policies and related funding that improves the movement of people and goods to spur economic growth.

### Energy

Advocate for the regulatory structure to achieve a fair balance between keeping prices reasonable and affordable for customers, while ensuring utilities have the resources they need to make appropriate investments in service reliability.

Support the development of renewable energy sources, provided the cost of these resources does not undermine economic development and job growth in the region. These efforts should recognize the importance of energy storage technologies that can make renewable sources such as wind and solar more feasible and cost-effective in our region.

Support energy efficiency programs that can help our member companies better manage their energy use while achieving clearly-defined environmental goals.

### Sustainability

Support efforts that promote community planning concepts and projects that would preserve and expand our park and green system and revitalize our urban area.

Advocate for funding of sustainable development opportunities that enhance regional corridors, such as the Tech Belt, Biomedical Corridor, University Park area, Eastgate renewal area, and Firestone Park redevelopment.

### Cultural and Recreational Amenities

Promote projects that would support the arts, sports and other recreational activities that add economic impact.

### Prisons and Corrections

The Greater Akron Chamber continues to support the utilization and expansion of successful, cost saving community corrections programs which help to make communities safer, hold offenders accountable, and provide opportunities for offenders to improve their lives.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has the second largest department budget in the State of Ohio.

While incarceration is dictated for violent, predatory offenders, there remains a large population of nonviolent offenders spending short periods of time in overcrowded, expensive prison cells. Over 60% of the offenders in Ohio's prisons are serving a sentence of less than one year and are unable to access rehabilitative services.

Support community corrections for appropriate offenders, which will save the state hundreds of millions of dollars that could be better spent on education, healthcare and workforce development.

### Communication

Strive for communication policies that promote and ensure fair and open competition and remove obsolete barriers that result from outdated, burdensome regulation and requirements; regulate for all technologies that provide similar services in markets that are competitive; and encourage innovation and investment.

### ENHANCE AREA BUSINESSES

The Greater Akron Chamber encourages efforts to grow and enhance the region's business community by advocating for policies that promote an efficient and profitable business climate.