



## **2007 Public Policy Agenda Education and Workforce Development**

### **Public Policy Agenda Executive Summary**

The Greater Akron Region is poised to realize economic growth and investment over the coming years, and the Greater Akron Chamber is ready to spearhead the charge for business and job growth for the area. As a leading economic development organization, the Chamber is dedicated to creating a political climate that encourages business attraction and retention, job creation, entrepreneurship, workforce development, and infrastructure support, making the Greater Akron Region a superior choice for business location and providing a high quality of life for the people of the region.

The 2007 Public Policy Agenda outlines the issues that our business leadership believes will promote investment in our region. 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 know that we can provide a framework for guiding responsible public policy decisions that foster economic growth, job creation, and a strong quality of life for our communities.

### **Education and Workforce Development**

The economic future of the region will be dependent on having an educated and skilled workforce. In order to meet the challenges of a competitive global economy, the Greater Akron Chamber is engaged in a number of initiatives to address educating, attracting, and retaining a world-class workforce able to meet the needs of employers.

- The attraction and retention of a talented workforce will be at the forefront of the Greater Akron Chamber's workforce agenda. **Focusing on the 18 recommendations of Rebecca Ryan of Next Generation Consulting, the Chamber will advocate for policies and funding that enhance the urban core to retain and attract young professionals.**
- Universities provide leadership in innovation and technology, providing educational opportunities for training employees to be highly skilled and technologically savvy. **The Greater Akron Chamber will work with our University Partners to enhance their ability to provide advanced training to the regional workforce.**
- Effective and efficient training and education of incumbent workers is an essential for business expansion. The Greater Akron Chamber's agenda includes supporting the Summit/Medina One- Stop Employment and Training Center. **The Chamber will continue to monitor the Workforce Investment Act to advocate for reauthorization of funding and advocate for programs that fulfill the need of our region's businesses.**

- Educating our children in grades K-12 is the first step in developing a creative, skilled workforce. **The Greater Akron Chamber will continue to work with the Akron Public Schools, City of Akron, National Inventors Hall of Fame, and The University of Akron on the implementation of a math, science, and technology community learning center. We will continue to advocate for innovative curriculum and school reform that brings students back into the district and provides a strong basis for future employment.**
- Funding of public schools K-16 is critical to their success. Ohio is ranked 37th in the amount of public investment in primary and secondary education nationally. State funding for our universities has dropped significantly over the years. **The Greater Akron Chamber will encourage communities, public schools and universities, and governments to work together to fund public education for the economic success of the region.**