



FLORIDA'S 2017 BUSINESS AGENDA



**FLORIDA
CHAMBER**
of Commerce
SECURING FLORIDA'S FUTURE
FloridaChamber.com

Making Florida's business climate more competitive is what the Florida Chamber of Commerce fights for every day. Another legislative session in Florida means another opportunity to create the right environment for economic growth, advance Florida's business agenda, defend our state's progress, and provide our elected leaders a chance to demonstrate they are champions for free enterprise.



**Help us make Florida more competitive
by visiting www.FloridaChamber.com
or by contacting us at 850-521-1200.**

Securing Florida's Future



Closing Florida's Talent Gap by Improving Educational Opportunities

One of the biggest concerns we hear from businesses of all sizes is the need for a qualified workforce and highly trained talent pool. The Florida Chamber believes a talented workforce is Florida's best long-term economic development strategy. Consider this: today's kindergarten class will be entering the workforce in 2030. The Florida Chamber is committed to ensuring all of Florida's students have the opportunity to succeed at all levels of Florida's education system. To help drive meaningful education and workforce initiatives, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Providing parents, students and teachers with the best educational options for success.
- ▶ Helping turn today's youngest learners into tomorrow's high-wage earners.
- ▶ Supporting rigorous accountability standards for schools and effective measurements for student success.
- ▶ Renewing a focus on STEM initiatives throughout Florida's education system.
- ▶ Investing in digital learning and virtual education efforts.
- ▶ Creating higher education opportunities and championing training programs to ensure Florida has a diverse and talented workforce.

Diversifying Florida's Economy Creates High-Wage Jobs

Diversifying Florida's economy is key to creating jobs and opportunities. We must continue to support initiatives that champion innovation and new technology, attract emerging industries and sectors, and provide Florida with a chance to lead the nation in job diversification and investment. In order to continue Florida's commitment to having the most competitive business climate, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Championing efforts at the state and federal level such as targeted Enterprise Florida investments and global trade agreements, which will help strengthen Florida's manufacturing sector, create jobs and make Florida the leader in international trade.
- ▶ Supporting initiatives that attract and create high-wage jobs and bring capital investments to our state.
- ▶ Fueling an innovation economy by attracting targeted industries and emerging technology sectors.
- ▶ Providing capital options and opportunities for Florida's small businesses and supporting the efforts of Florida's Small Business Development Center so more Florida start-ups succeed.
- ▶ Increasing Florida's share of venture capital dollars in order to spark innovation and create jobs.
- ▶ Continuing to strengthen Florida's historic leadership role in space exploration.
- ▶ Creating more job opportunities and greater economic diversity in Florida's rural communities.
- ▶ Supporting growth in Florida's veteran, military and defense industries.

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Preparing Florida's Infrastructure for Future Growth

The Florida Chamber estimates between now and 2030, six million more people will call Florida home. As the third most populous state in the nation, it is crucial we get infrastructure policies right. This means more than ensuring there are roads to travel – this means supporting investments in hard and soft infrastructure such as energy, water, telecommunications and more. In order for Florida to continue to grow in smart and efficient ways, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Protecting Florida's water future by supporting science-based infrastructure investments and initiatives that allow our state to grow while protecting our precious natural resources.
- ▶ Continuing to create reliable, efficient, affordable and sustainable energy solutions.
- ▶ Protecting Florida's transportation trust fund so major economic development investments in infrastructure connectivity can continue.
- ▶ Supporting innovations in all modes of transportation.
- ▶ Streamlining state, regional and local processes by embracing proactive growth leadership initiatives.
- ▶ Securing continued improvements in Florida's mortgage foreclosure challenges.

How are early learning, infrastructure and healthcare important to Florida's economic development?
Learn more about each of these issues by visiting www.FloridaChamber.com/Issues.

Keeping Florida's Business Climate Competitive

Florida wins when our businesses and families thrive. The Florida Chamber believes one way we can continue to lead the nation in job creation is to build a business climate that attracts new businesses and investments from around the world, and allows businesses and families already here to grow and succeed. While Florida is moving in the right direction, to remain competitive, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Fighting against workers' comp rate hikes that only benefit plaintiff trial lawyers and hurt job creators.
- ▶ Reforming Florida's bottom-10 ranked legal climate, a system currently creating a \$3,400 "tax" for families each year.
- ▶ Creating competitive and stable insurance markets.
- ▶ Creating a fair tax system that helps put money back into the pockets of small business owners and eliminates uncompetitive tax policies like the Florida-only Business Rent Tax.
- ▶ Supporting efforts that protect businesses from costly and unnecessary regulations and mandates.
- ▶ Protecting the private property rights of Floridians.
- ▶ Ensuring state and federal wage protection regulations benefit employees and employers.
- ▶ Lowering burdensome unemployment compensation taxes.
- ▶ Protecting employee choices by reducing the economic burden of unions' collective bargaining processes.
- ▶ Championing a medical liability environment where meritless lawsuits are discouraged, in order to help Florida attract world-class medical professionals.

Florida's 2017 Florida Business Agenda



Making Florida Government More Efficient

In order for Florida to continue moving in the right direction, our state must ensure all 67 counties and 412 cities are working toward a common goal – making our government more efficient, transparent and conducive to private-sector job growth. By eliminating burdensome regulations as well as policies that drain taxpayer dollars, the focus can remain on creating jobs. For more efficient government systems, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Improving government efficiencies by eliminating burdensome regulations and processes that often hinder the ability for businesses to grow and succeed, particularly small businesses.
- ▶ Modernizing Florida's retirement system and stopping the taxpayer bailout of pensions. It's time to stop bailing out an unfunded system.
- ▶ Supporting consistent federal immigration policies.
- ▶ Protecting Florida's constitution through the Constitution Revision Commission.

Championing Florida's Quality of Life

Florida has much to offer its current and future residents. However, our state's unique quality of life is constantly under attack from special interests. By uniting Florida's business community, the Florida Chamber believes we will continue to make our state the best place to visit, live, learn, work and play. This means focusing on affordable housing, stopping the expansion of Las Vegas-style casinos, breaking the cycle of generational poverty, embracing cost-saving adaptations to Florida's healthcare system while focusing on better outcomes, and more. In order to protect Florida's quality of life, the Florida Chamber's 2017 Business Agenda recommends:

- ▶ Embracing telehealth policies that accentuate Florida's free market environment, improve outcomes and lower costs.
- ▶ Advocating for better outcomes through a more affordable and efficient healthcare delivery system.
- ▶ Continuing to oppose the expansion of Las Vegas-style casino gambling.
- ▶ Expanding medical education opportunities and providing targeted training in key health education programs to serve Florida's rapidly growing population.

From workers' comp to healthcare, the Florida Chamber's task forces and coalitions are laser focused on helping Florida employers engage in making better policies and creating valuable jobs for everyone.

Interested in engaging? Visit www.FloridaChamber.com/Issues.

The Florida Chamber of Commerce



MAKING FLORIDA MORE COMPETITIVE

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non-profit in Florida fighting to make sure
you don't become one too. To join our
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and create economic opportunities,
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