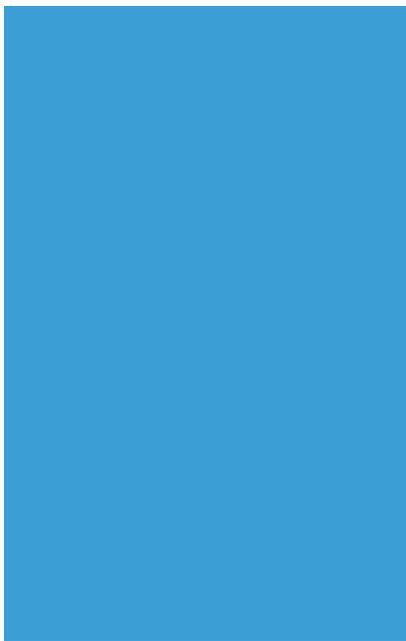
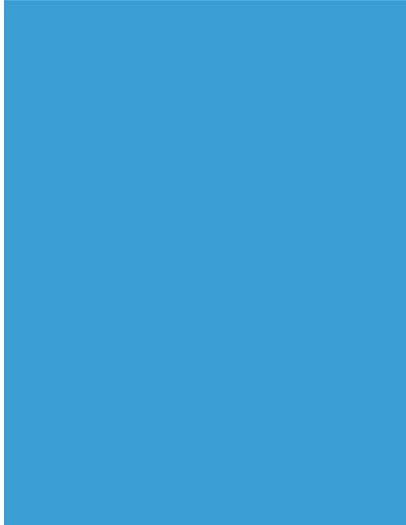




2019-2020 Legislative Agenda

Plan for Prosperity



Plan for Prosperity

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

2019-2020

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce supports a wide variety of initiatives that build a stronger local and regional marketplace and economy. A strong economy provides the tax base necessary to support education and local services, along with building a sustaining community infrastructure. Consequently, we support a public policy agenda that fosters business growth and creates jobs.

We advocate for policies that strengthen talent and business attraction and retention to protect and grow family-supporting jobs in Wisconsin. For Oshkosh and Northeast Wisconsin to be successful, policies must be in place which allows local and regional companies to compete on a global level.

As an organization:

- We support a tax system that incentivizes business growth and workforce investment.
- We support efforts to streamline and reduce regulation that increases the cost of doing business.
- We support empowering local government to use economic development tools in ways that will help them grow their employment and tax base.
- We support honesty in taxation that ensures revenues collected are expended for the reason stated.
- We support initiatives that ensure Wisconsin workers have the skills to compete in a global economy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Successful economic development plans will include plans for attracting, retaining and developing a strong pipeline of young workers. States who are successful at this will grow their economy much quicker and be more sustainable into the future. The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce recognizes that all efforts to strengthen and diversify our local and regional economy must include a commitment to education and training, ensuring that citizens, businesses and other organizations benefit from new knowledge, research, workforce talent, entrepreneurialism and innovation. A strong K-12 and post-secondary education system is critical in creating a pipeline of talent to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to enter the workforce quicker. We support initiatives that provide workers with necessary skills to compete in a global economy and meet evolving workforce needs of employers.

Workforce Development

- ✓ Support equitable funding for K-12 public education so that all public school districts can afford equipment and personnel to provide skills/certifications for high school aged students in collaboration with their area technical college or university.
- ✓ Expand Dual Enrollment - Wisconsin should expand dual enrollment opportunities so more students can earn higher education credits through the UW System, or make progress toward receiving a technical certification through the Wisconsin Technical College System while they are in high school.
- ✓ Support initiatives to grow the State's skilled workforce, including incumbent and transitional worker training, recruitment and retention incentives for in-demand professions and technical education programs.
- ✓ Support the provision of additional state General Purpose Revenue (GPR) as an investment in UW Oshkosh and UW System initiatives, including those that:
 - Lessen the time-to-degree, a primary driver of the cost of college, to successfully move students through the educational pipeline and into the workforce faster. Strategies include expanding dual enrollment opportunities that move first-year college experiences into students' senior years of high school.
 - Develop new partnerships with businesses and organizations that open doors to mutually-beneficial student internship and work experiences.
 - Seek new flexibility in the management of procurement and construction, which can save the UW System time and money.
 - Continue pursuit of greater operational efficiencies.
- ✓ Support the UW System's and the Board of Regents' proposal to extend a statewide undergraduate resident student tuition freeze through year one of the 2019-20 biennium and provide a tuition control in year two that limits any proposed increase to the rate of inflation.

Taxation



Burdensome taxes – whether on individuals or businesses – make Wisconsin less competitive. Our high-quality services must be funded adequately, but continued progress must be made to eliminate excessive tax burdens on state residents.

- Phase out and/or repeal the personal property tax paid by businesses on equipment which is difficult to administer and costly to comply with.
- Oppose modification to property tax assessment that does not meet the uniformity clause of the State's constitution and that shift the property tax burden onto commercial and industrial property owners.

Continue meaningful limits on school and local government property taxes, while allowing for reasonable increases from new development.

Encourage Balanced Budgeting - The size and scope of government should be limited to the greatest extent possible. We must avoid unsustainable spending that often drives future tax increases. Our state budget should follow generally accepted accounting principles, avoid raids on dedicated funds, and maintain a healthy reserve/budget stabilization fund. Any surplus revenue should be dedicated to tax relief for the taxpayers to whom it rightfully belongs.



TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

A robust transportation infrastructure network is essential to economic growth. Ensuring adequate funding is available scheduled road maintenance and road improvements will give Wisconsin manufacturers an advantage over their competition.

- ✓ Support the development of a fair and reliable transportation funding plan for Wisconsin. Support an increase of transportation funding based on User Fee Approach that includes (exclusive and/or combination):
 - Gas Tax
 - Registration Fees
 - Special sales tax of automotive-related parts
 - Extend the 5% sales tax to gasoline purchases, provided funding is earmarked exclusively for transportation related expenditures
 - Creation of an interstate tolling system

- ✓ Support the following transportation projects:
 - Planning, expansion and construction of Interstate 41 from Appleton (Hwy.15) to the southern Brown County line.
 - Planning and construction of a west side arterial from State Hwy. 21 to State Hwy. 44.
 - Reconstruction and expansion to four lanes State Hwy. 21 from Oshkosh to Omro.
 - Reconstruction & expansion of State Highway 26 to a four-lane facility from I-41 to US 151

- ✓ Oppose the creation of a local municipal Transportation Utility or a Transportation Assessment Replacement Fee (TARF) that disproportionately shifts the cost on to commercial and industrial property owners based on the amount of parking lot stalls, square footage of parking lots and/or buildings, or other factors.

REGULATORY REFORM

Unpredictable and overbearing government regulation can be responsible for driving businesses to states with more predictable and flexible regulations. Wisconsin's regulatory environment must strike a balance between protection and the cost of implementation. The State needs to have a competitive business climate and should seek to eliminate and reduce state regulations that impede economic growth and job creation.

Oppose an expansion of the salary threshold for the exemption of overtime pay under the Federal Labor Standards Act.

Support harmonizing Wisconsin's Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) law with the federal law to end duplicative, expensive compliance for employers.

Support state-wide employment standards. The State, not local units of government, should be in charge of setting employment law standards. Lawmakers should pre-empt local governments from being able to set employment law standards that are different from state law in areas like wage and hourly, employment discrimination, sick leave, family leave, and other employment regulations that differ from state or federal regulations.

Align Wisconsin employment and environmental regulations with corresponding federal requirements to eliminate the additional cost and complexity of complying with overlapping and "Wisconsin-only" regulations.

Sunset Regulation After 10 Years - Regulations written by unelected bureaucrats stay on the books indefinitely, leaving us with an outdated regulatory system that often does not reflect modern day practices. To ensure regulations are still necessary and as efficient as possible, require all regulations to sunset after 10 years to force agencies to reevaluate them for continued relevancy or necessity.

Review and Repeal Obsolete Regulations - Improve our regulatory environment by reviewing existing administrative rules to repeal or reform obsolete, costly or cumbersome regulations.

Remove Felons as a Protected Class Under the Fair Employment Act - Allow employers to terminate or refuse to employ someone convicted of a felony. Require uniform enforcement at the state, county, and municipal levels, pre-empting local governments from treating felons as a protected class.

2019-2020

HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Pre-empt Local Discrimination Laws -

Employers need consistency and certainty in the employment laws they must follow. The state should recognize this as an area of statewide concern and prohibit local units of government from enacting employment discrimination regulations. We need to get local governments out of the HR business for private employers.

Reform Wisconsin's Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) -

Governor Thompson signed Wisconsin's FMLA in 1988. President Clinton signed the federal FMLA in 1993. A harmonization of our state law and federal law has never taken place, leaving Wisconsin companies to deal with two sets of rules. Exempting employers who must follow federal regulations from the state law would remove the burden of complying with both laws, and remove confusion resulting from compliance with two overlapping and conflicting leave laws.

Contain Workers Compensation Medical Costs with a Fee Schedule -

Wisconsin's work comp medical costs are significantly higher than the national average, making our employers less competitive. We support curbing these costs, as 44 other states have already done, by implementing a fee schedule for workers compensation charges.

