

**Fresno Chamber of Commerce  
Government Affairs Council  
2014 Public Policy Platform**

**Mission Statement:**

Represent the interests of business on legislation and regulations. Promote action on key legislative issues through grassroots efforts to ensure the business viewpoint is expressed to local, state and federal elected officials.

**Priority Issues:**

- **American Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Support legislation and policies that help businesses comply with ADA requirements.

Support legislation that reduces frivolous ADA lawsuits on businesses.

Support efforts to ensure that reforms passed in 2008 to curb the problem of small businesses being victimized by unscrupulous ADA shakedown lawsuits are maintained.

- **Air Quality**

Support viable alternative energy methods that businesses can use.

Support ways to develop infrastructure for the use of long-term viable alternative fuels.

Support legislation that reduces the expensive mandates placed on businesses when considering ways to conserve energy.

Encourage and support policies that aim to improve the quality of the air while not adversely impacting the competitiveness of California businesses.

Support policies that will not adversely impact the competitiveness of California business as a result of AB32 implementation.

- **City and County Budgets**

Encourage city and county leaders to adopt budgets that require them to control spending, limit excessive union raises and health benefit packages and establish a “rainy day” fund.

Encourage city and county leaders to plan budgets with a five-year revenue and spending forecast.

Encourage city and county leaders to engage the business community in their budget planning processes to help look for more efficient ways to operate government including the possibility, where applicable, for privatized services.

Review and evaluate all proposed city and county tax increases to ensure they do not unduly target or burden business.

Encourage city and county leaders to work together on efforts to integrate public-safety services as a way to save money and operate more efficiently.

Evaluate all fee increase proposals and support only those fee increases that are consistent with providing more efficient services without unduly harming the business climate.

- **Class-action Lawsuits**

Provide recommendations and monitor reforms to ensure timely compensation for plaintiffs.

Support legislation that protects businesses against frivolous lawsuits.

- **Economic Development**

Support private enterprise and development projects that enhance economic development and create jobs.

Support programs that provide tax credits or assistance to businesses.

Support downtown revitalization efforts.

Support legislation that reduces the excessive regulations, fees and unfunded mandates placed on businesses that interfere with economic vitality, competitiveness or job creation.

Support policies that allow for improved contracting opportunities for small businesses.

- **Education**

Support an educational system that prepares students for jobs and careers starting in middle school.

Support programs that provide student internships.

Support and promote programs that provide incentives for local companies to hire students.

Support and promote vocational and career technical training programs at the high school and post-secondary levels.

- **Eminent Domain**

Advocate for redevelopment agencies and cities and counties to strictly follow the law when utilizing eminent domain.

Support private property rights and the use of eminent domain only as a last resort.

Monitor the use of eminent domain on a case-by-case basis.

- **Energy**

Oppose legislation that subjects businesses to costly regulations and places caps on the amount of greenhouse gases they can emit.

Support measures that invest in new transmission and transmission upgrades.

Support policies that are dedicated to load reduction.

Support measures that lower the price of energy paid by customers.

Support exploration of alternative energy and the use of renewable energy.

Allow individuals or businesses to sell excess power to utilities.

- **Government-Mandated Wages and Benefits**

Support free-market determination of wages for all employees.

Support unbundling exempt salaries from minimum wage increases and any automatic escalation of wages tied to the cost of living indexes.

Support elimination of daily overtime and promote return to a weekly overtime standard.

Support the inclusion of tips in calculating minimum and living wages.

Support flexibility for employers and employees to mutually set meal and break periods and a flexible workweek.

Oppose local living wage ordinances.

Support the reform of prevailing wage laws on public works projects.

Oppose mandated sick pay.

Oppose legislation that eliminates the secret-ballot process or modifies the process for union elections as of November 2009.

Oppose Project Labor Agreement (PLA) mandates.

- **Health Care**

Oppose legislation that creates a mandatory, tax-funded, government-operated health insurance programs.

Oppose employer-mandated health coverage.

Oppose legislation that penalizes businesses that do not provide health benefits to their employees.

Support legislation that allows employers to offer a minimum benefit plan, enabling small employers and their employees to buy health care coverage at a more affordable price.

Support measures that implement a moratorium on benefit mandates.

Support measures that streamline government regulations to increase efficiencies and reduce overall administrative burdens.

Monitor state funding for Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to providers of health care and fight future attempts to further cut reimbursement rates.

Support voluntary measures that promote wellness and disease management education programs.

Oppose measures that place unfunded mandates on hospitals.

- **Immigration**

Support legislation that creates a comprehensive guest worker program. The guest worker program should ensure future economic needs for workers and deal with the status of undocumented workers already in the United States.

Support legislation that strengthens national security by providing for a thorough screening of foreign workers and creates strong disincentives for illegal immigration.

Support legislation that creates an employment verification system that is fast and reliable for employers and those seeking employment.

Support legislation that ensures all workers enjoy the same labor law protections.

Support legislation that encourages all individuals who are trying to become permanent residents/citizens has a good understanding of the English language and American civic requirements.

- **Land Use and Development**

Support market driven development, both commercial and residential, which may include a variety of development densities.

Support policies that streamline the development process.

Support cost-effective building standards that minimize air pollution, energy use and water consumption.

Support policies that promote affordable housing in aggregate for the Greater Fresno area.

Support policies that promote future land development that will attract and retain businesses.

Support higher density mixed use development in aggregate for the Greater Fresno area.

Support mixed-use, higher density development in aggregate for the Greater Fresno area.

Support the Williamson Act Program.

Support land use, planning, housing and zoning issues that encourage and promote business development.

Monitor policies that impact developer fees.

Monitor any amendments to the general plan and provide recommendations as needed.

Monitor the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint.

Encourage changes to the Endangered Species Act that takes into consideration the economic impact.

- **Paid Family Leave**

Support policies that conform and unify current state and federal family leave laws without additional mandates.

Support policies that enact a small employer exemption from the Family Temporary Disability Insurance (FTDI) program.

- **Political Action and Campaign Financing**

Support Chamber programs that identify, recruit and educate candidates for local offices, without regard to political affiliation.

Support efforts to make California elections more competitive through redistricting.

Oppose legislation and policies that spend taxpayer dollars on political campaigns.

Oppose legislation and policies that tax or impose fees on businesses to fund political campaigns.

- **Revenue Bonds**

Only support bonds that are defined and contain built-in cost controls.

Encourage public agencies to have a plan in place to insure accountability and efficient use of funds.

- **State Budget**

Encourage state legislators to adopt a budget that promotes a healthy economy, provides for more efficient operations, curbs spending and allows for businesses to remain competitive in the global market.

Oppose new programs or services that do not have a funding source or will result in tax increases.

Encourage state legislators to adopt a two-year budget cycle.

Support legislation that establishes a “rainy day” reserve fund.

Ensure that budget cuts or tax increases don’t unduly target or burden California small businesses.

- **Tourism**

Maintain a strong relationship among the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) to boost tourism.

Support efforts to include local businesses as convention hosts.

Support competitive funding from government entities for the CVB to improve tourism efforts and recruit more conventions to our community.

- **Transportation**

Support policies and legislation that repair the local, regional, and state transportation system in a fiscally responsible manner.

Support efforts to improve the current transportation infrastructure to accommodate future economic and population growth.

Provide input on the prioritization of Measure C projects in an effort to maximize the leveraging of funds where applicable.

Support efforts to bring a high-speed rail system to California with a stop in Fresno and a maintenance facility.

Encourage the California High Speed Rail Authority to contract with local private sector businesses, utilizing resources found within the Community in order to maximize opportunities for economic vitality and job creation.

Monitor the economic impact of fee increases at local airports.

Support ongoing inspection facility at the Fresno Yosemite International Airport.

Support efforts to bring more airline carriers to Fresno.

Support policies that would create a non-reimbursable port of entry status for the airport.

Oppose legislation that increases firefighting requirements at the airport.

Support the designation of Highway 99 as an interstate.

Support local private sector business as an alternative to public agencies in the design and construction of infrastructure and transportation projects.

Support the construction of Veterans Blvd and all efforts to secure additional funding.

- **Unemployment Insurance (UI)**

Support legislation that addresses ways to ensure the Unemployment Insurance fund has enough money to pay out future benefits.

Oppose legislation that proposes higher unemployment taxes on employers.

- **Unfair Competition Law**

Support policies that protect businesses and consumers from unfair business practices.

Oppose efforts to repeal limits on unfair business practice litigation.

- **Water**

Support policies and legislation that increase the developed water supply in California for agricultural and urban uses.

Support policies and legislation that increases above ground storage capacity, improves through Delta and other conveyance and encourages conservation.

Oppose legislation that places environmental restrictions on pumping water out of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

- **Workers Compensation**

Oppose changes to the Workers' Compensation Act of 2004.

Support workers' compensation reform measures that reduce financial burdens on businesses.