



## 2015 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Government Affairs Committee

Chairperson – Joshua Hoppes

### Priority Items

Legislative objectives and specific legislation the Chamber will actively support or oppose during the 2015 session:

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes any bill that would prevent municipalities from partnering with private broadband providers, or, when necessary, developing themselves, the advanced broadband infrastructure that can stimulate economic growth and job creation across the state.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes legislation that expands property tax exemptions to include for-profit businesses.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports proposed legislation to allow for limited self-distribution by Kansas microbreweries.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes any legislation that would restrict or prohibit the use of public funds by local units of government for lobbying purposes, or prohibit the use of public funds to pay membership dues to an organization that engages in lobbying activity.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports The Market Place Fairness Act, which would help level the playing field for Kansas retailers.
- The health care costs of low income uninsured individuals are currently being passed on to area businesses and others supporting the health care system. As such, we support practical and near-term solutions that will maximize insurance coverage for all Kansans and reduce the burden on our local hospitals and other health care providers.

## **Important Items**

Legislative objectives and specific legislation the Chamber will endorse and monitor during the 2015 session:

### **Federal and State Facilities in Leavenworth and Lansing**

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports federal funding for the construction of a new medium-security prison facility in Leavenworth.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports continued funding for facility improvements and rehabilitation programs at the Lansing Correctional Facility.

### **Fort Leavenworth and Department of Defense**

- Leavenworth and Lansing are the proud home of Fort Leavenworth and the Combined Arms Center, which provides an economic impact of \$2.8 billion for not only the Leavenworth-Lansing area, but also the Kansas City Metro area. The Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center is also housed in the City of Leavenworth, and supports Veterans within the surrounding 37 counties. The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports initiatives to develop opportunities for cost-sharing on projects or any initiative that provides mutually beneficial support to our Department of Defense operations in the area.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber supports the Combined Arms Center initiative for the potential relocation of the Sergeants Major Academy and the Warrant Officer Career Course to Fort Leavenworth. This will further highlight the importance of education within the Army by consolidating all cohorts at one location (Officer, Noncommissioned Officer, Warrant Officer and Civilian).
- Because of the high number of educated, experienced veterans in our area, the Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports incentives that encourage the relocation of business ventures to the area, so businesses may capitalize on this highly-skilled workforce.
- Considering our significant veteran population and the location of the Dwight D. Eisenhower V.A. Medical Center in our community, The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports initiatives to locate a State Veterans home in the Leavenworth-Lansing Area.

### **Education**

The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce understands the important role quality public education, pre-K to post-secondary, plays in the development of a high-quality workforce. The Chamber supports policies and funding that encourage the development and support of a quality pre-K through

post-secondary education system that prepares students for college and/or a career, and cultivates a competitive, well-trained workforce. The Chamber also supports measures to enhance career and technical education within our public higher education institutions.

### **Economic Development**

Kansas must have available a competitive business incentive package that is relevant, flexible and simple to utilize. It is important that the economic development tool box remain vibrant to assist in the expansion and recruitment of capital investment and quality jobs. It is also important that Kansas maintain and improve useful economic development incentives, including the High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP) and Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) program, to remain competitive.

- A well-funded, properly managed countywide EDC is important in helping our community compete with communities throughout the metro area and across the Country. The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce urges our County Commissioners to join the Cities of Leavenworth and Lansing, and restore county funding for LCDC and LCPA.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports the authority of cities to offer property tax abatements to encourage business investment in their communities.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports the continued use of TIF's, the Neighborhood Revitalization Act, the Downtown Redevelopment Act, and the Community Improvement District Act to promote local development.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports the ability of Kansas cities to utilize STAR bonds as an economic development tool.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports cooperative ventures between the state and local government in Kansas to promote tourism as an industry which is vital to growth and development all across the state. The State of Kansas should commit more resources to the promotion of tourism.

### **Taxation**

The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce believes it is important to recognize the necessity for adequate state funds to meet the needs of Kansas citizens and businesses. The Legislature cannot continue to resolve its budget issues by taking revenues from, or transferring expenses to, county and city governments. As the Kansas economy continues to recover, the focus should be on responsible fiscal policy that provides Kansans the basic services they need without placing undue burden on Kansas taxpayers.

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports continuing to find ways to reduce government spending through increased efficiency and exploring private-sector options for state government functions.

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes the sunset or repeal of existing sales tax exemptions on business inputs and professional services.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes any attempts to roll back the 2012 & 2013 tax cuts.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports a reform of the tax appeal process to give Kansas businesses an affordable and impartial system to resolve tax disputes.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes legislation that would expand property tax exemptions to include for-profit businesses.

### **Transportation**

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports the continued funding of the Kansas T-Works Comprehensive Transportation Program. We oppose any diversion of funds from the Kansas Highway Fund.

### **Regulation**

- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce supports clear, common-sense regulation that promotes a healthy business climate for our state and our country.
- The Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce opposes burdensome, over-reaching regulation that stifles economic growth and job creation

LEAVENWORTH LANSING AREA