

2022 Federal Legislative Priorities



Top 8 Federal Legislative Priorities

March 2022 • San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



1. **Supports** continued economic relief to help small businesses recover from the impacts of COVID-19.
2. **Opposes** legislation that would aim to directly increase the burden of taxes and mandates on small businesses.
3. **Supports** legislation creating a permanent solution allowing DACA participants to receive lawful, permanent status and continue their contributions to the United States.
4. **Supports** much-needed comprehensive immigration reform to help businesses meet their critical workforce needs and encourage economic growth.
5. **Supports** expanding the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) targeted groups to include military spouses.
6. **Supports** all actions to address supply chain constraints and encourage the free flow of goods and services with U.S. Trading Partners.
7. **Supports** reforming and implement policies, rules, and regulations that allow for the investment in successful and employer led workforce development programs such as:
 - Federal incentives to businesses that offer internships and apprenticeships;
 - Perkins Career & Technical Education programs;
 - Adult education and training programs;
 - Veteran training programs;
 - Educator development programs; and
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs
8. **Supports** local and regional appropriations requests and grant applications consistent with the surface transportation reauthorization and supplemental funding provided through the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) signed into law November 15, 2021.



Small Business

Minority, Women and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses

- Supports efforts to strengthen the minority business community, including:
 - ◊ Expanding federal contracting opportunities for minority, women and veteran-owned small businesses.
 - ◊ Efforts to increase the number of minority, women and veteran-owned small businesses.
 - ◊ Efforts to integrate Hispanic businesses into the global economy.
- Supports financial support for incubation and acceleration programs assisting small business with capacity building and job creation programs especially in HUBZones.

Innovation, Research & Development

- Supports increased funding for federal government programs, such as the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, that drive innovation and foster economic growth.

Taxes & Regulations

- Oppose legislation or proposal that attempts to sacrifice the privacy of business owners.
- Opposes legislation regulating a private business's daily operations and or employment practices.
- Supports tax reform and relief for small businesses so they can reopen safely, remain competitive, and create jobs.
- Supports regulatory reform and relief for small businesses that will help them grow and create jobs.

Access to Capital

- Supports legislation to encourage access to capital for small businesses.
- Supports innovative financing options that would allow small businesses to access capital and grow.

Economic Development

Federal COVID-19 Relief Funds

- Supports easing restrictions in how our community partners in the public and private sector can spend federal COVID-19 Relief Funds.

Business Expansion

- Supports protecting and strengthening The Opportunity Zone Program.

Military, Veterans & Spouses

- Supports legislation that expand hiring and career opportunities, improve access to continuing education programs and increase small business opportunities for military spouses.
- Supports sustaining and enhancing Joint Base San Antonio's (JBSA) mission readiness, and ensure the long term protections of the region's military bases by helping to preserve, protect and grow military missions – such as Space Command, the Defense Health Agency, and other missions – and installations in the San Antonio Region.
- Supports sustaining and increasing P4 partnerships with region's military and pursue infrastructure funding through the National Defense and Authorizations Act (NDAA) and appropriations process for off base projects and other programs.
- Supports authorizing and appropriating additional funding to improve Department of Defense (DoD) military readiness rates and reduce the maintenance backlog in aviation in our military services.



- Supports robust public-private partnerships between the DoD and the private sector on sustainment of critical infrastructure, aircraft, and other military assets thereby leveraging decades of expertise and efficiency to ensure continued military readiness and long-term cost savings to the United States Government and taxpayers.
- Supports key clarifications and modifications to Section 703 of the 2021 NDAA to help streamline the billing/collection process for BAMC and other military treatment facilities (MTF) who provide medical care to civilians.
- Supports holding the 2023 Department of Defense Warrior Games in the City of San Antonio, and advocates for San Antonio to be considered to host the Games in future years.
- Supports for the establishment of a Trauma Center of Excellence in San Antonio.
- Supports the Army National Guard's use of Martindale Air Field and consideration for additional Guard missions in San Antonio.

Surface & Public Transportation

- Supports appropriations for Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development following the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Supports increased funding opportunities for operations and capital expenses in collaboration with local partners to advance multimodal transportation options as identified and supported by locally driven processes.
- Supports a multi-year extension of the Alternative Fuels Tax Credit.
- Supports legislative language for the usage of alternative fuels as a transition toward a higher usage of electric vehicles as technology demonstrates usable range and capability.

Aviation

- Supports continued funding of the FAA Aviation Workforce Development Program established in the 2018-2023 Reauthorization Act to include \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year through the end of the next FAA Reauthorization Act.
- Supports Congressional changes to the Perimeter Rule and/or Slot Rule in order to secure a nonstop flight from San Antonio International Airport to Washington Reagan National Airport (SAT-DCA).
- Supports raising or eliminating the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) cap of \$4.50.
- Supports an increase in Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding and greater flexibility for the use of AIP funds.

Energy

- Supports urging the U.S. Environment Protection Agency to decline reclassifying Bexar County as moderate ozone nonattainment, and instead retain its marginal classification or recognize the State of Texas request for a 179B waiver for Bexar County.
- Supports comparability in federal energy tax policy by including a direct pay option for public power and reinstatement of the ability to advance refund existing debt.
- Supports the allocation of federal funding and grant programs to incentivize research, demonstration and deployment of evolving technologies that will promote community energy resiliency, innovation, infrastructure growth, and assist with net emissions reductions in Bexar County.
- Supports H.R. 5749 by Reps. Castro and Doggett to prevent unreasonable and exorbitant natural gas price increases during a declared natural disaster, thereby protecting customers from unnecessary financial hardship as experienced during Winter Storm Uri.
- Supports additional federal funding for programs such as the Low-Income Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as it provides invaluable support and financial assistance to our San Antonio community members unable to pay their energy bills.
- Supports carbon-reduction proposals that are resource-neutral, economy-wide, and give San Antonio the flexibility to invest in and transition to low- and non-emitting technologies in a manner consistent with our community's priorities and the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP).

Healthcare

- Supports alternative options for affordable and high-quality health insurance plans available to small business owners and their employees.
- Supports adjustments and appropriations to enhance the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP).
- Supports the extension and renewal of the 1115 Texas Transformation Waiver.
- Supports effective solutions, such as Telehealth, that will help expand access to quality, affordable Health Care.
- Supports legislation to expand access and improve the quality of comprehensive mental health services, opioid addiction, and substance use disorder treatments such as:
 - ◊ The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Act of 2021;
 - ◊ Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act;
 - ◊ Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act;
 - ◊ Medicaid Reentry Act;
 - ◊ Mental Health Access Improvement Act; and
 - ◊ Promoting Effective and Empowering Recovery Services (PEERS) in Medicare Act
- Supports full parity for behavioral health services in the PPACA.
- Opposes CMS planned budget/pay cuts to ancillary medical providers.

Immigration

- Supports expanding programs for job-creating entrepreneurs to start and grow business in the U.S.
- Supports increased allotment of H1-B visas for high-skilled immigrants to meet the needs of businesses.
- Supports effective use of modern technology for enhanced, practical, and effective border security.
- Supports facilitating secure domestic and international travel through support of programs such as Secure Travel Partnership (Visa Waiver Program) and the Trusted Traveler Program.

Housing

- Supports increasing and/or maintaining funding for programs used to increase multifamily and single family housing production, as well as homeownership. Programs include but are not limited to the Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Tax Exempt Bonds, Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CHOICE Neighborhoods and Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME).

Water

- Supports assistance for Low-Income Utility Customers Impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- Supports tax Exemption for Water Conservation Rebates Similar to the Electric Utilities Rebates.
- Supports monitoring the new Lead and Copper Rules to Ensure Reasonable Implementation.

Education

Public Education

- Supports full funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) by increasing the percentage funded to what was intended when originally enacted in 2004 and 2015.
- Supports comprehensive infrastructure funding that includes public school facilities, universal full-day Pre-Kindergarten for three and four-year old children, and high-speed broadband access expansion.
- Supports efforts to strengthen the teacher pipeline, including incentives toward entering the teaching profession, creating a system for transferability of certifications between states, and continuing to improve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.
- Supports congress monitoring the spending timeline for Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to ensure that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are able to fully meet student needs.
- Supports increasing funding for federal Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) education programs and initiatives that help expand the STEM workforce.

Higher Education

- Supports enhanced FY22 funding for our nation's academic health centers through increased appropriations to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Health Research Services Administration (HRSA), the Department of Defense's (DoD), Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), and other related federal agencies, an action which will benefit health education, research, and patient care in San Antonio, the South Texas Border Region, and beyond.
- Supports reauthorizing the Higher Education Act (HEA) focusing on the following key improvement areas:
 - ◊ Student affordability, access and success;
 - ◊ Simplification of the FAFSA;
 - ◊ Institutional accountability; and
 - ◊ Innovation and compliance
- Supports preserving and enhancing the Federal Pell Grant program by:
 - ◊ Extend eligibility to short-term training programs;
 - ◊ Increase the annual maximum amount;
 - ◊ Permanent expand eligibility to incarcerated students ("Second Chance Support"); and
 - ◊ Increase lifetime eligibility to 14 semesters
- Support & strengthen under-resourced institutions & student support programs by investing in such programs as:
 - ◊ Strengthening Institutions (Title III-A of the HEA);

- ◊ Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions;
- ◊ Historically Black Colleges and Universities;
- ◊ TRIO;
- ◊ GEAR UP; and
- ◊ CCAMPIS Create an aligned national program focused on ensuring student access to community colleges.

Workforce Development

- Supports continuing to invest in dedicated community funding for workforce and training programs such as the Strengthening Community College Training Grants (SCCTG) and rebooting the successful Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCT) grant program.

International Trade

- Supports the nomination and confirmation of four members of the Ex-Im Bank Board of Directors.
- Supports public/private partnerships that drive investment at homes and from foreign interest.
- Opposes restrictions that would hinder domestic subsidiaries of foreign direct investment companies to participate in the political process.
- Supports continued implementation of the Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act program allowing communities and private sector to provide for alternative financing arrangements for certain services and for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure at land ports of entry and for other purposes.
- Supports modernization of the U.S. Tax Code to allow U.S. businesses to effectively participate in the global economy and repatriate profits earned abroad.
- Supports a capital increase for the North American Development Banks to fulfill its mission of improving environmental infrastructure and the quality of life on both sides of the border.
- Supports strengthening the political and business relationships with governments from across the world to promote trade, strengthen global supply chains with strategic partners and foreign direct investment.
- Implores the US to stabilize and honor existing agreements and advocate for trade partners to do the same, through the provisions and channels established in the existing legal framework.



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