



2016 Chamber Federation Priorities

ENACT MEANINGFUL BUSINESS PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Minnesota businesses property taxes are among the highest in the nation. Tax burdens on some properties are more than 90% higher than the national average and more than 200% higher than in neighboring states. Businesses pay a disproportionate share of the property tax; they have 12% of the market value but pay 32% of the total property tax. Much of that disparity is due to the classification system and the state levy that businesses must pay in addition to all their local property taxes. We support reducing this fixed cost of doing business by reducing the statewide levy and eliminating the automatic inflator. We oppose any additional shift of taxes to commercial/industrial properties.

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT

We support passage of a 10 year, comprehensive transportation funding package that provides increased investment in the state's multi-modal transportation infrastructure. This package should provide long-term, sustained investment that will enable the state to maintain our vital transportation infrastructure and provide for strategic enhancements. The state should use General Fund revenues generated from the statewide sales tax on auto parts and rental cars to fund increased investment in our transportation system; augment any new investment through an increased focus on efficient use of resources; use Trunk Highway bonding to help finance projects in the state's road and bridge system and General Obligation bonding to support local road and bridge, transitway, port, rail, airport, and other transportation infrastructure projects across the state. In addition, policymakers must ensure that the state's transit needs in both the metro area and Greater Minnesota are addressed through this comprehensive, long-term investment.

WAGE AND BENEFIT MANDATE PREEMPTION

Counties, cities, and townships should not be able to enact their own local minimum wage ordinances or benefit mandates as it will disrupt the state employment market and impede hiring practices and job growth. The Minnesota Chamber opposes the annual minimum wage automatic inflation index that begins in 2018, and believes the Legislature must remove the inflator from current law.

MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT MODIFICATION (ADA)

The Chamber Federation seeks to change the Minnesota Human Rights Act so that before a plaintiff can sue a business for a disability access violation, the plaintiff must serve that business with notice of the alleged violations. The notice must identify the nature of each alleged violation with specificity and give the business at least 90 days to begin to remedy the violation. A business should have up to one year from the date of notice to fix alleged violations that cannot be reasonably fixed in 90 days – i.e. structural changes or changes to a historic building. A plaintiff may only sue if the business fails to remedy the violation within the 90-day or one-year period, whichever timeline applies given the nature of the alleged violations.