



greater
FAIRBANKS
chamber of commerce

2019

Advocacy Priorities

#1: LONG-TERM FISCAL PLAN

Alaskans need a long-term fiscal plan which utilizes earnings from the permanent fund; makes government more efficient; encourages resource development and business-friendly practices; and includes passage of an appropriate and timely capital budget.

#2: INITIATIVE PETITION PROCESS

Initiative petitions ask voters to make simple yes or no decisions about complex issues without subjecting them to detailed expert analysis. Changes in the initiative process should produce better public policy in a comprehensive and balanced manner equally benefiting both voters and the legislative process.

2019 Advocacy Agenda



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Alaska's Interior will only thrive if the business and economic climate is healthy. The local economy is heavily dependent on a few key industries: health care, government, natural resource development and tourism. Diversification is important to the long-term sustainability of the Greater Fairbanks area.

initiative petition process

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balanced budget

Government leaders need to pass a responsible budget, in a timely manner, balancing state revenue against expenses. Alaskans need a comprehensive, long-term sustainable fiscal plan promising state funds to essential programs while looking ahead to strategic investing that will promote long-term economic growth.

taxes

Oppose industry-specific targeted taxes at the state and local level, including increases on existing targeted taxes, unless self-imposed by the industry. Increases in industry-specific taxes should not fund general services.

support the university of alaska

A vibrant university is vital for the education of our citizenry, the development of a highly trained workforce, and the research and development endeavors necessary to address the state's critical challenges. The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce urges the Alaska State Legislature and the governor to maintain strong support for the University of Alaska.

business retention and expansion
Identify opportunities for local businesses to expand operations, create jobs and diversify.

arctic opportunities

Promote economic development, and improve health, safety and emergency response in Alaska's Arctic.

criminal justice reform

Continue to support the development and implementation of legislation that will result in a more efficient and effective criminal justice system aimed at reducing recidivism through substance abuse treatment programs, prevention and supervision programs, while continuing to enhance public safety.

community development and revitalization

Support the demolition plan for the Polaris Building in downtown Fairbanks. Enhance the economy through Explore Fairbanks' efforts to develop a convention/performing arts center.

arts engagement

Promote the efforts of the arts community that make the greater Fairbanks area a more attractive place to live, work and visit by strengthening the partnership between business and the arts and cultural communities.



EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The needs of Interior Alaska businesses demand a well-educated, well-trained and readily-available skilled workforce.

policy review

Review policy that impacts Alaska's educational communities from early childhood to postsecondary in public, private, homeschool and higher education systems.

workforce development

Promote workforce training options/programs such as apprenticeship, certificate/endorsement and professional development in all sectors, in an effort to improve, supplement and sustain the skill set of our local workforce. Encourage workforce development through career and technical education support programs at the secondary and postsecondary level.

Advocate for University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College programs. Promote an educated workforce through postsecondary education programs and/or credential training in high demand sectors as a key element of advancement for the Alaska population.

systemic change

Advocate for a systemic change in the timing of budgeted state and borough support for Alaska school districts and postsecondary institutions intended to promote consistency of personnel and continuity of programs.

business partnerships

Educate, encourage, mentor and support member-businesses that endeavor to provide work-based opportunities and educational training to students at the secondary and postsecondary levels, in the spirit of both economic development and motivational awareness.

research and development

Support the University of Alaska Fairbanks' research and development endeavors, including the Center for Innovation, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship, via public-private partnership for the development of intellectual property; provide education and promote awareness, related to the multiplier concept, for funding to encourage investment.



ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

High energy costs are a barrier to economic opportunity in Interior Alaska. Affordable energy will encourage capital and infrastructure improvements and lower costs for residents and businesses.

Responsible development and management of Alaska's natural resources is critical to supporting a growing economy and improved quality of life for Alaskans. Environmental legislation and regulations should not increase the administrative burden resulting in unnecessary rules, regulations or project delays that become cost prohibitive to business and development.

sustainability

- Pursue the development and balanced management of Alaska's natural resources including minerals, energy, agriculture, forestry and wildlife, while protecting Alaska for future generations.
- Support self-sustaining recycling efforts promoting wise stewardship.

resource development

- Support long-term, stable state and federal fiscal, regulatory and tax policies that foster increases in investment leading to more development and production of resources.
- State and federal regulatory and permitting laws should support exploration, site development, employment, infrastructure, research and production.
- Support development of a North Slope natural gas project that will provide competitive gas for both in-state consumption and export to foreign markets.
- Support legislation prohibiting severance taxes on metal mines.
- Support legislation that prohibits specific mineral taxes at the local level, maintaining that authority at the state level, and implements revenue sharing of a portion of the Alaska Mining License Tax to municipalities or boroughs that host a metal mine.

affordable energy

- Promote home and business energy audits and weatherization programs.
- Support the community's efforts to get natural gas to as many Interior Alaska customers as possible, at the lowest cost possible, as soon as possible through the Interior Energy Project.
- Support reasonable and prudent efforts to meet the federally imposed PM 2.5 regulations.
- Support efficient, affordable, and reliable power production for Interior Alaska.



HEALTH CARE

The Chamber supports health care reform that expands affordable access to meaningful coverage. The Chamber is focused on promoting education and awareness opportunities that will help businesses address health care costs as well as promoting effective private sector solutions to address these challenges. The Chamber encourages reforms to the Affordable Care Act that provide relief to employers and employees.

reform

Support ongoing health care and Medicaid reform to lower the cost of health care and support long-term health insurance solutions for businesses and the individual marketplace in Alaska.

education and awareness

Facilitate educational opportunities to assist small and medium sized businesses reduce the cost of health insurance.

workers' compensation reform

Improve the balance between providing timely, efficient and fair compensation to injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers.

patient protection and affordable health care act and other health care tax provisions

Support reforms that reduce health insurance premiums and increase the amount that can be deposited into health savings accounts.



MILITARY AFFAIRS

The Chamber commits to develop, maintain and support cooperative and beneficial partnerships between the military and Interior Alaska businesses that stimulate regional economic growth; promote the capabilities and sustainability of our Interior military installations; and support our servicemen and women, their families and their role in defending our nation's interests.

military development and operations

- Support efforts by the Fairbanks North Star Borough, City of Fairbanks and City of North Pole to establish military facility zones as a vehicle to obtain and administer funds for business development specifically relating to military activities.
- Continue to support efforts to advance military operations on all Interior military installations including: Eielson Air Force Base, Clear Air Force Station, Fort Wainwright, Fort Greely and the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex.

- Support military community-compatible land-use and air space proposals to assist the missions of local military installations.
- Promote Military Community Partnership programs with private businesses and the use of local contractors for federal military projects.
- Collaborate with Interior military installations and contractors to prepare the community for construction of the Long Range Discrimination Radar at Clear AFS; stationing of the next generation fighter jet and the F-35's at Eielson AFB; upgrades to Fort Greely missile defense and organizational growth at Fort Wainwright.

service members

- Assist veterans, retirees, transitioning service members, military spouses, National Guard members and Reserve Component members in finding employment opportunities.
- Support Interior National Guard and Reserve activities and efforts to highlight the benefits of our hometown heroes, including the basing of additional assets in the Interior, the expansion/upgrade of facilities, the Air National Guard aerial refueling tanker aircraft upgrade and other initiatives.



TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The ability to meet the current and growing demands of transportation and infrastructure needs is critical to the long-term economic development and job growth potential for Interior Alaska. Without the ability to effectively and efficiently move goods, services and people throughout the state, businesses cannot compete and succeed.

fairbanks metropolitan area transportation system
Reinstate funding for the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System.

transportation funding

Support revenue for maintenance, enhancements and efficiencies within Alaska's transportation infrastructure. Support the creation of an Alaska Transportation Infrastructure funding program. Support U.S. Congressional efforts to secure viable, long-term solutions for the Federal Highway Trust Fund and Airport and Airway Trust Fund (Aviation Trust Fund).

transportation hub

Enhance Fairbanks as the transportation hub for Interior and Northern Alaska.

fiscal engagement

Monitor state and federal budgeting to ensure priority infrastructure projects receive adequate attention.

We Commit To:

advocacy

To advocate for and work toward the best environment possible for businesses, big and small, to survive and thrive in the Greater Fairbanks Area.

promotion

To create awareness that drives economic strength and growth for Interior Alaska.

development

To be an informational resource and networking hub where enterprising people can use and share knowledge.

Through advocacy, we will affect policy that creates an ideal environment for businesses of all sizes to prosper in our region while promoting businesses throughout the community and fostering the development of resources that position the Chamber as a hub of information and connections. The Chamber will find success by keeping these goals in balance and our community will thrive when we capitalize on the interactions between them.

To download the complete 2019 Advocacy Agenda or access more advocacy materials and resources, please visit our website: FairbanksChamber.org.



ADVOCATE. PROMOTE. DEVELOP.

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