



## *Voice of Business Committee*

The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce Voice of Business Committee is an advisory group made up of Chamber business members who review information, hear presentations on issues and when needed develop public policy positions for the Board of Directors to consider. The committee will only consider positions that are consistent with our chamber's values, principles, and policies established by the Board of Directors.

All businesses – no matter their size or business type – are affected by legislative issues. The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce works with elected officials at the city, county, state and federal levels to promote pro-business agendas.

At all levels of government, legislation affecting business is proposed on a constant basis. Many of these new rules and regulations can have a serious impact on local businesses and economic development. We encourage local business owners to get involved in the political process.

With your help we can keep our region business friendly and prosperous!

### **Primary Functions of the Committee:**

- To monitor, analyze, and prioritize public policy issues which impact chamber members and the greater business community.
- To create surveys to membership for feedback on issues and their relevance to member businesses.
- To recommend to the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors policy positions regarding local, state, and federal legislation and proposed regulations.
- To prioritize issues that may require special attention by the Chamber.
- To prepare plans of action for the Chamber staff and volunteers to participate in the government, community, business, media, and other arenas to achieve action on the policy positions adopted by the Chamber Board of Directors.
- To assist the Chamber in developing and maintaining positive relationships with local, state and federal officials.

- To maintain a presence and stay informed at all levels of government through regular attendance at meetings of City Councils, County Board of Supervisors, State Legislature and having at least an annual presence in Washington.

**Development of Legislative Agendas:**

- Issues to be included in a legislative agenda should be timely, relevant to the business community's interests, and have the possibility to affect outcomes.
- Membership will be polled annually to discern the needs of the business community.
- Federal agenda items will be considered annually in advance of the Chamber's Washington, DC visit.
- State agenda items will be considered annually in advance of the meeting of the Virginia General Assembly.
- Local agenda items will be considered annually and updated as needed.

**Issue Review Process**

If you or your company/industry have an issue that you would like to submit for consideration and review by the Chamber, please submit the **Policy Consideration Form**.

**Public Policy Guiding Principles:**

The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce is committed to improving the business climate and quality of life for the Greater Augusta region, and to act whenever the interests of the business community are challenged. The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports the economic development of the region, pro-business and good government policies. To that end:

- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports economic development initiatives which enhance the competitiveness of existing and new business.
- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce encourages efforts that support and ensure equal opportunity for all citizens of the region.
- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce is in support of high-quality, cost effective government services that are offered in a manner conducive to the growth of competitive businesses which are the economic drivers of the community.
- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports promotion of the region, both nationally and internationally, as an attractive destination for vacation, new business, and relocation.
- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce recognizes that quality of education is a business issue and that a system of accountability for student achievement is established and maintained.

- The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce recognizes the public education system, in partnership with the business community, must work to prepare all students to be successful future employees and entrepreneurs.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports creative and fair funding methods to adequately fund our public school system and institutions of higher learning so they remain effective in their quest for excellence.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce is committed to reasonable actions that protect and conserve the environment while balancing business interests.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports changes in the healthcare system which encourages greater coverage for the uninsured while promoting competitiveness and quality of care.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce supports a comprehensively planned, constructed, financed and well maintained infrastructure as the key to long-term economic development, sustainability, and quality growth in the region.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce must support and promote the continued development of the region's key economic sectors including, manufacturing, healthcare, education, and agriculture.
  - The Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce opposes overreaching, unrealistic, unachievable regulatory standards which are costly and burdensome to business and stifle economic growth.
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