

MANSFIELD AREA



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



2019 TEXAS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

OUR MISSION

The Greater Mansfield Chamber of Commerce's purpose is to be a community catalyst for change that will create an impactful difference to the success of our members.

One of the core activities in support of our purpose is to advocate for pro-business policies and legislation to help businesses in the area grow and prosper.

It is critical that the members of the Texas Legislature who represent our city and our area hear and understand our legislative priorities for the 86th Texas Legislature. Our legislative agenda informs them of what we support and what we oppose in legislation we expect to be considered.

Our member's interests fall in four broad categories: Education and Workforce Development, Transportation, Economic Development and Healthcare.

The Greater Mansfield Chamber of Commerce, representing our members' interests, strongly supports these positions:

- **Support seamless transitions and pathways from early childhood education until completion of a college degree, which would lower student costs and more effectively produce an educated workforce including incentivizing and aligning dual credit courses.**
- **Support Texas paying 50% of the cost of school district operations and keeping all school property taxes recaptured in the M&O funding stream.**
- **Oppose legislation that discriminates against groups based on race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation and elimination of protected status granted by city or county ordinances.**
- **Support the development of a Texas Plan for block granting of Medicaid that would allow for the addition of work requirements, minimal co-pays and other provisions to make Medicaid less of a drain on the Texas budget while providing healthcare for the indigent and working poor.**

Education and Workforce Development

To retain and attract employers to the Mansfield area will require a stream of qualified candidates for jobs in demand. We are served by an “A” rated Independent School District, a Community College District focused on Workforce Development and a top tier research university that is graduating thousands of young professionals each year. We are blessed that they work closely together to address our education needs at all levels. We support legislation that will continue and enhance our current, positive trajectory.

Higher Education

- Support funding the state higher education formulas to recognize increased enrollment and to continue to help hold tuition costs down for students and their families.
- Support funding the Governor’s University Research Initiative (GURI), Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP) and Core Research Fund (CRF) and other efforts to provide support to Texas emerging Tier 1 Universities.
- Support incentivizing partnerships between independent school districts and higher education providers that promote rigorous dual credit courses leading to commercial certification, Associates Degrees, entry into the workforce or to four-year colleges.
- Support seamless transitions and pathways from early childhood education until completion of a college degree, which would lower student costs and more effectively produce an educated workforce including incentivizing and aligning dual credit courses.
- Support increasing incentives in the higher education funding system for desired outcomes to include degree completion and recognized industry certification attainment.
- Support Community College funding to prepare Texans for high demand local jobs.
- Support the current level of funding for tuition assistance for low income Texans including the Texas Grants and Texas Equalization Grants programs.
- Support actions that will facilitate transfers between Texas Universities and Colleges.

Public Education

- Support including desired student outcomes like certificate completion, diploma awarded, acceptance in the military or workforce or acceptance in higher education in the funding formulas for K-12 education.
- Support funding the current unfunded mandates placed on schools and oppose any new unfunded mandates.
- Support continuous improvement of the school district and campus accountability system striving to accurately reflect student achievement not socio-economic status.
- Support the development, implementation and state funding of a plan to reduce the probability of deadly shootings on education campuses.
- We support universal pre-K funding incentivizing innovative delivery systems that meet high standards.
- We support Texas paying 50% of the cost of school district operations and keeping all school property taxes recaptured in the M&O funding stream.
- We support modifying the school funding system to reflect the actual cost of providing educational services.
- We support incentivizing and aligning dual credit courses.

Economic Development

Mansfield is experiencing an economic development growth period. To maintain our community momentum we support continuing the economic development tools that are instrumental in attracting new employers to our city.

- Support home rule for cities, counties and school districts recognizing that there are a limited number of issues where statewide oversight is necessary to promote business across city and county boundaries.
- Support maintaining all the economic development tools available now including reauthorizing Chapter 312.
- Support funding the Governor's Enterprise Fund at \$200 million for the biennium.
- Support free market reforms in the distribution of automobiles and alcoholic beverages.
- Support the current tax caps on all entities with automatic roll back elections.
- Oppose legislation that discriminates against groups based on race, religion, national origin or sexual orientation and elimination of protected status granted by city or county ordinances.

Healthcare

Effective, affordable and available healthcare is necessary for Mansfield to prosper. Our members and their employees depend on the provision and regulation of healthcare by the state and the county.

- Support the development of a Texas Plan for block granting of Medicaid that would allow for the addition of work requirements, minimal co-pays and other provisions to make Medicaid less of a drain on the Texas budget while providing healthcare for the indigent and working poor.
- Support more medical residency slots funded in Texas to keep a higher percentage of Texas trained medical professionals in the state.
- Support more community based mental healthcare services to reduce the mental health burden on the state and county criminal justice facilities.
- Support work to secure a long-term solution to extend the state's Medicaid 1115 transformation waiver.
- Support state funding to add more mental health professionals to K-12 campuses for early detection and treatment of mental health problems.
- Support reforms in healthcare delivery systems to expand access to treatment by nurse practitioners and through telemedicine and other emerging technologies.
- We support a stable long-term funding source for Trauma care.

Transportation

Mansfield prides itself on being “minutes to everything, second to none.” Maintaining that position in the North Texas market requires being connected to an efficient system of highway infrastructure.

- Support maintaining the funds from Prop 1 and Prop 7 dedicated to transportation.
- Support using toll roads to increase connectivity and reduce congestion where state highway funds are inadequate.
- Support managed toll lanes where drivers can choose free lanes or pay tolls to avoid congestion during peak periods.
- Support public-private partnerships to build transportation infrastructure.
- Support high speed rail built with private funds using reasonable eminent domain.
- Support using historical funding formulas to allocate transportation funds by region.

- Support an alternative tax on vehicles that use Texas roads but do not use gasoline or diesel.
- Support a lower “safe” cap on the rainy-day fund with the excess being used to fund transportation and education.
- Support aggressively pursuing federal matching funds for projects to bring as many Texas tax dollars back to Texas as possible.
- Support the reasonable use of eminent domain to build infrastructure like highways, rail lines, pipe lines, and utility lines.