

PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF PRO-BUSINESS LEGISLATION

The Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to present its Legislative Agenda for the 2007 General Assembly. These issues are critical to the future viability of the Upstate's economic climate.

In developing our legislative program, our Public Policy Committee thoughtfully considered a number of concerns brought forward by community stakeholders and Chamber members. Our advocacy during the session will be based upon important aspects of the following issues: Environmental and Water Issues, Economic Development, Healthcare Costs, Highway Infrastructure Needs, Education, and Workers' Compensation.

On behalf of our almost 900 members – who provide more than 30,000 jobs in our area – we look forward to working with the members of the Assembly to achieve these goals for the benefit of our community and our region.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND WATER ISSUES

- ✓ Play an active role in encouraging sound environmental policy that protect South Carolina resources, but does not hamper business competitiveness
- ✓ Encourage active participation of bi-state commissions (compacts) to develop baselines for agreements for inter-basin transfers of South Carolina resources out-of-state.
- ✓ Support efforts and activities that prevent designation as a non-attainment area by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Play an active role in encouraging growth in the state by raising worker productivity; reducing business costs; increasing the state's per capita income; and attracting high tech industry.

HEALTHCARE COSTS

- ✓ Ensure a viable health care insurance climate that facilitates access for businesses and their employees to affordable coverage and better contain costs by maximizing use of available federal matching money to adequately fund Medicaid, limiting the shift of employee health care costs to the business community.
- ✓ Increase the cigarette tax to the southeastern average in order to fully fund Medicaid.

2007 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA (CONTINUED)

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

- ✓ Support the maintenance, repair, and development of the South Carolina highway system in order to promote economic development and highway safety.
- ✓ Increase the motor fuel user fee to fund critical infrastructure needs.

EDUCATION

- ✓ Ensure funding for education to foster a highly educated populace to ensure a skilled, knowledge-based workforce which is so critical to the future economic and global competitiveness of South Carolina. Accountability will be essential in progressing toward this goal.
- ✓ Ensure funding for technical colleges to support educational programs that will better ready the future workforce; support the Education and Economic Development Act; and support the Center for Accelerated Technical Training.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- ✓ Reform the South Carolina Workers' Compensation System in a manner that stabilizes runaway premium costs, provides for the orderly dissolution of the state's antiquated Second Injury Fund, implements sound accountability measures to include transparency regarding Commission decisions, and maintains the overall integrity, consistency, and fairness of the system.

OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- ✓ Encourage an on-going dialogue with our Federal delegation with respect to lake levels in Lake Hartwell.