



2009 DC Federal Advocacy Initiative Federal Agenda

Clean Energy

Pecan Street Project

- Support funding requests and support collaboration with the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy

Green Collar Jobs Initiative

- Support funding requests from and collaboration with the Department of Energy and the Department of Labor

Renewable Energy

- Support for more aggressive national policies that facilitate market creation for renewable energy generation to draw manufacturing jobs and capital investment to Texas

Healthcare Reform

- Must provide real and substantial cost savings for employers and consumers
- Must enable a substantial increase in the percentage of the US population with affordable health coverage at a responsible and sustainable tax cost
- Must allow for multiple mechanisms (private, government, or some combination of both) for coverage options (and not drive our healthcare system to a single payer solution)
- Must enable and encourage meaningful competition in the marketplace as market-based reforms provide the greatest opportunity to achieve increased access while providing high quality and timely care
- Must provide appropriate incentives for consumers to (a) maintain good health (or improve health), (b) engage the healthcare system in the most efficient way (e.g. primary medical home vs. hospital emergency room) and (c) work with providers to manage chronic disease
- Must provide appropriate incentives to providers to (a) improve health of participants, and (b) guide patients to most effective and efficient access points and treatment options
- Must promote and financially incent the development of evidence-based treatment and therapies
- Must ensure that the implementation of health information technology (HIT) be governed by an inherent interoperability that provides both confidentiality and data security
- Must enable significant expansion of the number of healthcare providers (particularly primary care providers) through increased funding for medical education and the training of medical professionals
- Must encourage and reward entrepreneurship and innovation, including the development of new therapies and technologies

Innovation and Emerging Technology

Research and Development Tax Policy

- Support legislation which extends the R&D tax credit to at least 2010, makes the alternative simplified credit (ASC) permanent and increases the ASC rate from 14% to 20% to make the U.S. globally competitive

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Reauthorization and Reform

- Support legislation to re-authorize the SBIR program
- Support that legislation reinstate eligibility for small emerging technology companies which receive a majority of funding from multiple venture capital companies (note: in 2006 Chamber took an SBIR Reform position addressing the venture capital issue)

Patent Reform

- Support for patent reform that makes the requirements for obtaining a patent more clear, makes the process for obtaining a patent more fair and efficient, discourages frivolous patent litigation, and protects (and does not dilute) the rights and remedies of patent holders

Transportation

SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization

- Support swift reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU while ensuring a defined federal role, reformed existing programs, and increased federal investment in U.S. highways and transit systems

Decrease donor state disparity

- Request that Texas, the most adversely affected by the disparity between donor and non-donor states, keep a higher percentage of our gas tax revenue in the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU/transportation appropriations

Support the appropriations requests of local entities

These dollar amounts are tentative, until completion of the state budget, and guidance from Congress

- City of Austin – 10 projects, totaling over \$100 million
- Cap Metro - \$5 million for bus fleet replacement and \$2 million for permanent Oak Hill Park & Ride facility
- ASA - \$1.7 billion for freight line relocation; \$800 million to convert line to higher-speed passenger rail (\$2.5 billion total)
- HCC - \$2.5 million to construct 5 miles of the Capital Area Trail System

Education and Workforce Development

Simplify FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

- Continuing support for enabling the IRS to communicate tax filing information to the US Department of Education

Tuition and Textbook Tax Credit

- Permanently extend the American Opportunity Tax Credit (H.R. 598)

Employer Issues

Employee Free Choice Act

- Oppose replacing secret ballot elections with card check because card check makes employees and their companies vulnerable to coercive tactics
- Oppose allowing a government-appointed arbitrator to write the first collective bargaining agreement as it would discourage good faith bargaining
- Oppose punitive provisions that only subject employers to penalties –a system that addresses unfair labor practices must hold all participating parties accountable

E-Verify

- Postpone the implementation of a mandatory electronic verification system such as E-Verify until it is reasonably confirmed that the system is fully functional, effective, cost-efficient, and has a de minimis error rate