

Legislative Action

Education & Workforce Development

Continue to adequately fund Alabama's Education budget, including Alabama's First Class pre-kindergarten, career tech, dual enrollment and other innovative programs, in order to ensure a competitive increase in student scoring, higher graduation rates and competitive college and career ready graduates; maintain high academic standards and expectations for all Alabama students such as those found in the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards.

Seek a fiscal year 2019 state budget appropriation for the University of South Alabama that reflects the institution's successful enrollment growth and increased graduation rates over the past ten years, and additional funding to support USA Health and its specialized health care mission.

Support funding to establish a program coordinated by the University of South Alabama to support the needs of communities in Southwest Alabama to recruit, train and retain the more than 5,000 seasonal workers needed for the regions hospitality industry. The program would also focus on placing unemployed young Mobilians in unfilled jobs on the Alabama Coast.

Continue to identify needs and support demand-driven strategic workforce training initiatives in south Alabama's key economic growth sectors, including aerospace, maritime and advanced manufacturing.

Support measures to address the growing opioid crisis in Alabama that has detrimental effects on the availability of a qualified workforce, workplace safety and overall community health.

Energy, Environment & Infrastructure

Support the funding and construction of the proposed I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway widening project and partner with the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to actively seek construction funding through Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants and other sources.

Continued support to fund the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District Civil Works program in support of the deepening and widening and the annual operations and maintenance dredging of the Mobile Ship Channel; maintain necessary funding for the operation and maintenance of Alabama's commerce waterways, including the deepening of the Bayou la Batre and Coden ship channels.

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce supports increasing Alabama's investment in transportation infrastructure to sustain and promote economic growth, job creation, quality of life and public safety. The Chamber recognizes that there is a gap between current state resources and what is required to address the highway, bridge, and other road maintenance and capital needs in Alabama today and in the future, specifically for critical needs such as the completion of the four-laning U.S. Highway 98.

In order to ensure the consistent and bi-partisan management of the planning, building and maintaining of the state's multimodal transportation system and the long-term management of state transportation planning and revenues, the Mobile Area Chamber supports legislation to allow for a board-governance structure and a non-political, board-appointed director of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Healthcare

Support a health provider-driven approach to reforming Alabama's current Medicaid program to ensure access to care, control costs and maximize the return of Alabama's tax dollars to the state.

Seek an equitable resolution on the Medicare wage index issue so that hospitals in the region will be fairly reimbursed for the services they provide to the Medicare population.

Seek a permanent funding source for Mobile's Programs for All-inclusive Care of the Elderly (PACE) and the expansion of such programs across the state in order to draw down increased federal funds for the medical care of the state's growing nursing home population at a cost savings to Medicaid.

Small Business

Encourage the creation of a cabinet level position in the executive branch to focus on the creation and growth of small businesses and entrepreneurial development in Alabama.

Support the growth and development of Mobile's entrepreneurial community and Innovation PortAL's mapping of entrepreneurial talent to meet the growing technological needs of industry with early state funding opportunities such as the State of Alabama Full Sail fund. The Full Sail entrepreneurial fund will provide much-needed programming, skills training and funding for entrepreneurial clients as well as enable the engagement of local industry to identify technological solutions to small business challenges.

To support the growing 'social enterprises' entrepreneurial demand in Alabama, expand the legal definition of a Limited Liability Company in Alabama's code to include a low-profit limited liability company, or 'L3C' and a Benefit Corporation or 'B Corp', for-profit, social-benefit corporate entity.

To support the growth and expansion of local restaurants and consumer offerings in the restaurant industry's fastest growing segment, work to achieve the local authority necessary to implement the statewide "Brunch Bill" passed in 2017 that allows for 10:00 am on-premises alcohol sales on Sunday.

In order to avoid excessive and frivolous lawsuits and ensure fully-accessible public buildings and spaces, close the loophole in Title III of the American with Disabilities Act, by providing clearer rules for identifying and correcting ADA access violations and allowing business and property owners the opportunity to address and correct minor ADA infractions in a defined period of time, prior to an allowable civil law suit.

Protect an employer's right to provide a safe workplace by opposing any legislation that would keep an employer or property owner from restricting firearm possession on company or private property.

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Economic Development & Tax

In order to keep Alabama competitive with other Southern states and continue business investment and job growth, continue proven and accountable economic development incentives such as the Alabama Historic Tax Credit program, New Markets Development Tax Credit program, and the Alabama Film Credit. And strongly encourage Members of Congress to keep the Historic Tax Credit in the federal tax code.

Maintain federal military contracts with Mobile-area based employers, particularly for the construction of Austal USA's Frigate Littoral Combat Ships and Expeditionary Fast Transport vessels and the future small Surface Combatant ships, as well as Ingalls Shipbuilding's LHA/LPD Amphibious Assault Ships, destroyers and Coast Guard cutters.

Support fair trade and investment agreements that expand access to international markets, reduce trade barriers, and increase foreign direct investment creating a level playing field to put Mobile area families, businesses, and workers first and improving the overall international competitiveness of Alabama exporters.

Support all efforts to decrease workers' compensation medical costs in Alabama by decreasing fraud in unemployment and workers' compensation claims with stronger statutes:

- Maintain current Alabama laws that support an employer's right to choose the treating physician and second physician in workers' compensation claims.
- Enact statutes that allow businesses to perform the Workman's Compensation claim checks prior to hire.

Support the continuation of federal payments to Alabama and Mobile and Baldwin counties from the 2006 Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) in 2018 federal budgets. Under GOMESA, coastal states receive a share of revenue from oil and gas drilling in federal waters, which helps address coastline management programs in Alabama.

Support federal immigration reform that will secure our borders, establish reasonable and effective visa policies/procedures, and recognize the need to attract professional and highly-valued workers to the United States.

Preserve jobs and economic growth in all sectors through the reduction of overly burdensome regulations that increase the cost of doing business, create uncertainty and have the potential to stifle growth.

Mobile-Baldwin-Washington County Legislative Directory

Senator Gregory Albritton

State Senator District 22
(334) 242-7800
galbritton@att.net

Representative Alan Baker

State Representative District 66
(251) 867-0244
staterep@co.escambia.al.us

Representative Elaine Beech

State Representative District 65
(251) 847-2604
elainebeech83@gmail.com

Representative Napoleon Bracy Jr.

State Representative District 98
(251) 622-8118
napoleon@napoleonbracy.com

Representative James Buskey

State Representative District 99
(251) 457-7928
james.buskey@alhouse.gov

Representative Adline Clarke

State Representative District 97
(251) 434-2238
adline.clarke@alhouse.gov

Representative Randy Davis

State Representative District 96
(251) 442-2552
randalldavis14@gmail.com

Representative Barbara Drummond

State Representative District 103
(251) 471-5015
drummondbarbara@att.net

Representative Joe Faust

State Representative District 94
(251) 928-5445
jfaust@co.baldwin.al.us

Senator Vivian Davis Figures

State Senator District 33
(251) 457-4567
vivian.figures@alsenate.gov

Representative Victor Gaston

State Representative District 100
(251) 208-5480
hvgaston04@yahoo.com

Senator Rusty Glover

State Senator District 34
(251) 649-7380
kay.dierlam@alsenate.gov

Senator Bill Hightower

State Senator District 35
(251) 219-0078
bill@billhightower.com

Representative Thomas Jackson

State Representative District 68
(334) 636-8119
thomas.jackson@alhouse.gov

Representative Steve A. McMillan

State Representative District 95
(251) 948-5575
bcl07@gmail.com

Senator Trip Pittman

State Senator District 32
(251) 621-3555
trip.pittman@alsenate.gov

Representative Chris Pringle

State Representative District 101
(251) 341-1110
chrispringle@southerntimberlands.com

Representative David Sessions

State Representative District 105
(251) 865-4275
d.r.sessions@att.net

Representative Harry Shiver

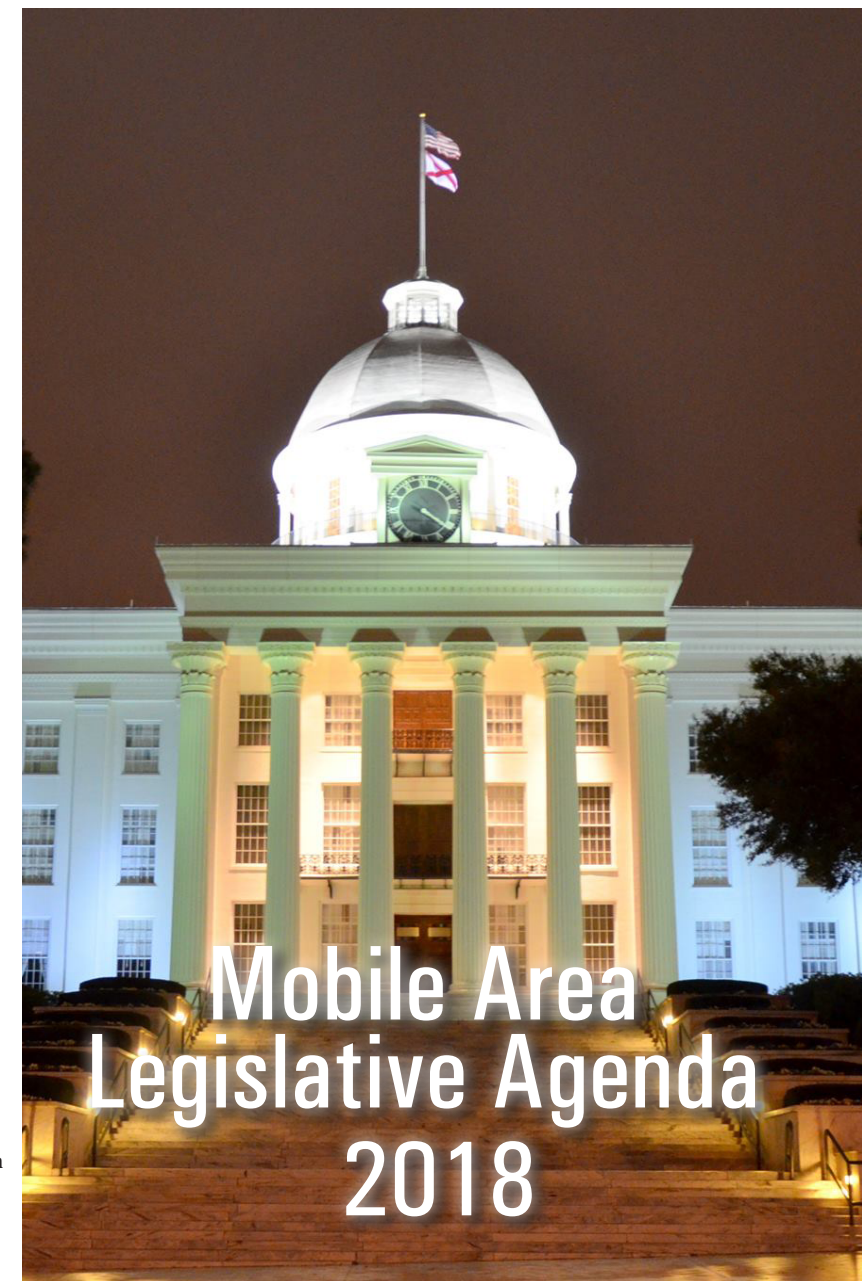
State Representative District 64
(251) 937-1391
harryshiver@aol.com

Representative Margie Wilcox

State Representative District 104
(251) 476-7711
margie.wilcox@alhouse.gov

Representative Jack Williams

State Representative District 102
(251) 331-1979
jackwilliams55@icloud.com



Serving as a progressive advocate for business, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce supports and encourages work at all levels of government to stimulate jobs; supports non-regressive sources of revenue without levying a disproportionate burden on any individual segment of Alabama's economy; seeks efficiencies in government and protects fundamental public services and infrastructure.

The members of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and Mobile's economic development partners have identified the following issues, policies and appropriations as fundamental to Alabama's progress because they will help to build additional jobs and a more positive business climate in the Mobile area.

