



# 2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

*The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce has served as the Mobile Bay Area's progressive business advocate since 1836. Mobile connects Alabama to the world, and the Chamber is here to advocate for legislation that grows Mobile and Alabama's influence in the region, across the country and around the world.*

## FUNDAMENTAL FOUNDATIONS FOR ALABAMA

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 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 building the I-10 Mobile River bridge and completing the four-laning of U.S. Highway 98 from Mobile's city-limits to the Mississippi state line.

Work in support of the Mobile Airport Authority's efforts to secure final funding of Mobile's new downtown airport at the Brookley Aeroplex.

Advocate for adequately funding 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 or Common Core.

Support a fiscal year 2023 state budget appropriation for the University of South Alabama that reflects the institution's positive impact on its students, community and our region, along with additional funding to support USA Health in recognition of its unique mission as the region's only academic health care provider with a Level One Trauma Center, Burn Unit and Neonatal Intensive Care facility.

Preserve the integrity of Alabama's First Congressional District through the 2021 redistricting process. It is imperative that Mobile and Baldwin counties remain together as a congressional district to build upon – and not harm – the united regional and business leadership that is unique to southwest Alabama.

## SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES, AMERICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER

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.

Encourage the representation and engagement of the Alabama Innovation Commission and the Alabama STEM Council to improve the creation and growth of small businesses and entrepreneurial development in Alabama as well as workforce development opportunities across the state.

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 state funding opportunities. Promote efforts to 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.

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 property.

Oppose any efforts to eliminate the necessity of obtaining a concealed carry permit.

Support measures to replenish the state's unemployment insurance trust fund that mitigates the impact of increased taxes on Alabama businesses, particularly small businesses, that are facing unprecedented unemployment insurance tax increases due to the ongoing pandemic.

## A HEALTHY ALABAMA

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.

Support a 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 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.

## GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF ALABAMA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

Support the continuation of federal payments to Alabama, specifically Mobile and Baldwin counties, from the 2006 Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA). Under GOMESA, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas receive a share of revenue from oil and gas drilling in federal waters, which helps address coastal restoration, hurricane protection and watershed management programs in coastal Alabama.

Advocate for investments in climate resilient infrastructure like a new I-10 bridge in an effort to mitigate damage from future storms.

## KEEPING ALABAMA OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce continues to advocate for the protection of businesses, both large and small, from legislation that would open the door to frivolous lawsuits, especially coronavirus-related litigation.

Advocate for legislation that protects existing business infrastructure and creates an attractive environment for economic development, ensuring Alabama is widely known as a business-friendly state.

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

Support all efforts to ensure a continue historic tax credit program for certified historic structures, a proven incentive for bringing more investment capital into projects that will positively impact job creation and promote sustained economic activity.

Support the renewal of the tax exemption for certain materials used in the reconfiguration of aircraft - materials which ultimately become part of the final, completed aircraft.

Support growth in the film and music industry in the State of Alabama by advocating for raising the \$20M incentive cap.

Continue 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.

## TRAINING & ADVANCING ALABAMA'S WORKFORCE

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

Work to meet the need for able-bodied workers in our region by advocating for reentry and job skills training programs for those currently in correctional facilities, serving sentences for non-violent crimes.

## MADE BY ALABAMA, FOR AMERICA & THE WORLD

Maintain federal military contracts with Mobile-area employers, particularly the Navy's shipbuilding blueprint for the future which includes current and future small surface combatants and auxiliary ships to incorporate autonomous and unmanned surface vehicles and Expeditionary Fast Transports.

Support free and fair trade and investment policies 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.

