

# 2024

## AMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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### AMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION

The mission of the Ames Chamber of Commerce is to provide our members services that strengthen the economic vitality and enhance the quality of life throughout Boone and Story County.

### PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM MISSION

To promote unity in the Ames Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) business community and encourage Chamber involvement through informed and active participation as public policy advocates for our local government, businesses, and industry partners.

### 2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Ames Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for promoting economic growth policies and initiatives on behalf of the Ames Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) business community including both Story County and Boone County. Each year, the Ames Chamber of Commerce crafts strategic legislative priorities to advocate for the strengthening and growth of Ames MSA and the State of Iowa's economic and community development efforts.

To this end, for the 2024 Legislative Session, the Ames Chamber of Commerce encourages the Governor and Legislature to focus on the following four policy areas of investment:

- Economic Development
- Workforce & Workplace
- Responsible Tax Reform
- Infrastructure Regional Projects

As various policy proposals are developed and debated, the shared goal should always promote growing Iowa's economy in an inclusive and beneficial way with specific support for these policy areas:

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Supporting Major Economic Growth Attraction (MEGA) Legislation: A top priority of the Ames Chamber this year due to the immediate positive impacts such state support would bring to our business attraction programs and building on local economic tools
- Supporting Research Activities Credits (RAC): Iowa's RAC has been utilized as a model by other states to incentivize additional investment in research and development. Companies must balance substantial financial risk with market profitability and this credit allows businesses to strategically plan for the long-term. The RAC provides another great attraction tool for new business growth
- Supporting High Quality Jobs Credits: This program is one of the main best tools for IEDA to attract new business and incentivize expansion in Iowa's leading industries
- Continued investment into Rural Iowa economic development tools. Regional partnerships are expanding beyond traditional city and county borders and require such investment to meet housing, quality of life benefits and even workforce demands in 2024

## WORKFORCE & WORKPLACE

- Continue to make Iowa a welcoming environment that is inclusive of a broad diversity of people
- Ensure state workforce and economic development programs can address the most pressing employee needs like child-care, affordable quality housing and retraining opportunities for higher job skills
- Retain more graduates from our community colleges, private colleges and Regent institutions with more investment to become lifelong Iowans
- Quality reform within public support systems to avoid a “cliff effect” impact that acts as a disincentive for potential employees to increase productivity or take promotion opportunities
- More investment into school and business partnerships that allow job internships and training for students that are seeking opportunities outside traditional college tracks
- Ensure adequate access and funding for mental health resources to both children and adults

## BUSINESS CLIMATE

- Protecting TIF (Tax Increment Financing) tools vital to economic growth projects across the region
- Reduce mandates on local and state governments through responsible reforms that positively impact local government budgets without tax increases
- Supportive of responsible state income tax reductions without impacting vital state funding sources for regional partners

## TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Continued state broadband investment which will continue to attract talent, competing globally while tapping new business growth with telecommuting and changing workforce demands
- Continue investment in Iowa’s water quality, transportation infrastructure and networks at the local community level
- Improve Iowa’s railways, workforce transit, intermodal rail, air service and create transportation hubs

Developing comprehensive policy strategies to grow Iowa’s economy that should include:

- Marketing Iowa to the national workforce market to attract new talent
- Attract new Iowans by pushing for a uniform immigration system across all states to vet international talent and policies that welcome those new Americans to Iowa and allow them to stay
- Quality housing investment that helps regions grow for generations in both rural and urban areas
- Help retain lower “Homegrown” Iowa student debt burdens to keep them here after graduation
- More diversified placemaking investment into quality of life, arts, culture, outdoor recreation for all corners of Iowa that we call home
- Funding new innovation grants to help all businesses for costly infrastructure investments for 21st Century needs addressing workforce shortages long-term
- Continuing strong state support for international business development attraction for the Ames MSA

To advance these priorities, the Ames Chamber of Commerce will continue to collaborate with Iowa State University, the City of Ames, Boone County, Story County, our community school districts, Des Moines Area Community College, and our numerous chamber and economic development partners throughout the state.

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For additional information, please contact the  
Ames Chamber of Commerce

[www.AmesChamber.com](http://www.AmesChamber.com)

For questions, please call 515-232-2310

