

2019 – 2020 POLICY AGENDA



BUSINESS CLIMATE

Long-term economic growth and investment rely on our region's competitiveness, which we strengthen by leveraging strategic advantages and capitalizing on our assets. The Metro Atlanta Chamber focuses on encouraging innovation, growing our knowledge economy, fostering entrepreneurship, boosting business growth and ensuring a strong quality of life for metro Atlanta's residents and visitors. We will accomplish this by pursuing policies that:

- **Bolster economic development tools and incentives** to start, recruit and retain businesses and events
- **Attract major sporting events** by working with the Atlanta Sports Council to leverage and showcase Atlanta's sports brands and the benefits they bring to the region and the state
- **Support trade policy and protect assets** that have propelled Georgia's standing as a global hub for international commerce
- **Increase funding for the Invest Georgia venture capital fund** and support other funding sources that foster innovation and drive entrepreneurship
- **Support a competitive tax environment** that maintains the state's economic and fiscal attractiveness and encourages business recruitment, retention and expansion
- **Allow those who control private property to regulate** what is permissible on the premises
- **Protect Georgia's top-rated business climate** against legislation that is discriminatory in nature and harmful to our ability to create, recruit and retain jobs

EDUCATED WORKFORCE

A highly-educated and skilled workforce is essential to a growing economy. Attracting and retaining quality jobs requires a strong and well-supported education and workforce system. As the global workforce continues to evolve, it is increasingly important to improve alignment among student instruction, teacher preparation, parent engagement, and the development of the necessary skills for future and current employees to help employers fill the available jobs. We will accomplish these goals by pursuing policies that:

- **Develop a globally competitive workforce** that aligns talent with demand and prepares Georgia's students for post-secondary education, from accessibility to completion
- **Increase the retention** of Georgia's post-secondary graduates and attract talent in high demand fields
- **Strengthen education pathways leading to employment** by increasing coordination of resources and alignment of curriculum between K-12 and higher education systems
- **Prepare educators and educational leadership** to maintain and bolster effective instruction and to strengthen Georgia's education systems
- **Encourage innovation in instruction and curriculum** by supporting the promotion of STEAM and career and technical education in both K-12 and post-secondary education
- **Boost early learning** by expanding access and affordability of quality-rated childcare and Georgia Pre-K

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TRANSPORTATION

Metro Atlanta and Georgia have prospered because visionary leaders created, maintained and invested in our transportation infrastructure. Our growing economy demands that we move more people and goods and continue to expand our transportation options and networks. We will accomplish these goals by pursuing policies that:

- **Establish long-term dedicated state funding** for transit improvement and expansion
- **Support local government transportation funding** initiatives
- **Expand public transit operations** and encourage effective coordination to provide seamless service for riders
- **Support transportation demand management strategies** including managed-lane options, telecommuting, bike/pedestrian facilities, public/private solutions and smarter land use
- **Upgrade existing freight networks** by increasing freight capacity and safety while maximizing operational and regulatory efficiencies for movement of freight
- **Embrace new technologies** such as autonomous vehicles and establish Georgia as a leader in innovation, research and applied technology in transportation

WATER, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

For long-term business growth, metro Atlanta's business community values sustainability and good stewardship of our region's natural resources. In addition to wise management of our water resources and natural environment, we must work together to maintain clean air while providing low-cost, reliable energy for residents and businesses. We will accomplish these goals by pursuing policies that:

- **Implement an action-driven sustainable state water plan** by focusing on conservation, capturing our excess rainfall and effectively managing our water resources
- **Uphold current law for Interbasin Water Transfers (IBT)** as a water management tool (Any revisions should be based on science, recommendations by the Department of Natural Resources and state and regional water planning efforts)
- **Promote long-term water management on a regional basis** using the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and other water councils/entities throughout Georgia
- **Enhance our sustainability reputation** and spur long-term economic growth by advocating for a clean, safe, reliable, affordable and diverse energy portfolio for Georgia, as well responsible management of all waste streams
- **Defend long-term access to Georgia's abundant surface water and groundwater supplies** by adequately funding our legal strategy
- **Support the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District** by advocating for a FY21 state appropriation of \$734,000 and promoting commercial water conservation programs