

# 2022 State Agenda

Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce

**The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce is part of a coalition of Northeast Kansas chambers of commerce called METL (Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka and Lawrence). The Chamber supports the following state METL priorities**

**KANSANS WORK.** Recruiting and retaining employees is Kansas businesses number one issue. To address this, METL supports:

- **Childcare.** Exploring solutions to the lack of available childcare which is keeping many families from returning to work. Responses could include making existing childcare tax credits more accessible, exploring the benefits of universal pre-K education in Kansas and taking advantage of federal funding.
- **Workforce Training.** Further collaboration among educators at all levels and the business community to develop creative approaches to education and workforce training.
- **Higher Education.** The requests of the Kansas Board of Regents to restore funding for public universities, community colleges, and technical colleges and proper funding of need-based student aid programs to ensure student access to private colleges and universities in Kansas.
- **Housing.** Exploring ways to help the residential real estate market regain its ability to keep up with the growing demand for quality housing in all of our communities.

**KANSANS CONNECT.** Moving people, goods and ideas into and across the Animal Health Corridor is critical to our future.

- **Transportation.** METL supports undiminished funding of the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program and will work as an active partner to (i) move the project to replace and expand the South Lawrence Trafficway (K10) through the Development and Construction Pipelines; and (ii) ensure the Polk-Quincy Viaduct Project continues to completion without delay.
- **Broadband.** METL urges stakeholders to collaborate around the extension of broadband technologies to all Kansans who need them and continue to help them utilize the technologies to which they have access. METL supports the responsible investment of AARPA funds to help this expansion of broadband coverage.

**KANSANS ARE FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE.** METL supports a fiscally responsible tax policy that encourages business growth and is competitive with surrounding states. This includes: seeking ways to make state tax reporting requirements more business friendly, especially for small businesses; restoring the Research and Development income tax credit to all types of business entities; supporting the Kansas Framework for Growth, as well as existing incentives, such as the HPIP, PEAK and STAR bonds; and investing one-time federal funding in economic prosperity initiatives.

**KANSANS ARE IN IT TOGETHER.** METL supports efforts to create a culture of health in the workplace and our neighborhoods. This includes strategies and solutions that would improve outcomes, expand access, help control health care costs and ensure the ongoing viability of health care providers and those they serve – and expanding Medicaid.

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In addition to METL priorities, the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce also supports the following items:

**Higher Education Funding** – The Chamber supports the budget request of the Kansas Board of Regents for Kansas State University, and Manhattan Technical College and supports budget request for full funding of the Comprehensive Grant Program for Manhattan Christian College.

**Military Impact Aid** – The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce actively supports the Kansas Legislature increasing the amount of federal Impact Aid received by Kansas school districts that are eligible to receive such aid, as long as there is not a concomitant reduction in the Base State Aid Per Pupil provided by the state. The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce actively supports the Kansas Legislature reinstating the Second Count Date for K-12 as originally implemented.

**Budget Surplus** – The Chamber supports using surplus funds to provide tax relief to Kansans, particularly small businesses.

**Alternative Valuation (Dark Store)** – The Chamber supports the idea that Fair Market Value should not include a hypothetical lease fee in order to maintain consistent valuation practice for businesses of all sizes.

**Redistricting** – The Chamber supports using common sense approaches to redistricting that would not dilute Manhattan's representation. This would include leaving all of Riley County in a single Senate district.

