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CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

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Public Policy Agenda 2014-2015  
Mid-Biennium Update

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## INTRODUCTION

The advocacy role of the Columbus Chamber centers around three key components: educating its members, building relationships and creating capital for the Central Ohio business community. To accomplish a successful advocacy program, the Columbus Chamber develops a Public Policy Agenda that focuses on its goals. The Public Policy Agenda will be a “rolling agenda” that serves as a base document and will constantly be monitored for purposes of updating or adding issues important to the Central Ohio business community. Therefore, the Chamber produces a mid-year update to track its progress.

The 2014 Columbus Chamber Public Policy Agenda provides an analysis of work the Columbus Chamber Government Relations Team has done on the issues that have been identified as needing immediate action. It is important to note that this agenda does not represent all issues pertinent to the business community.

The 2014 Public Policy Agenda is presented in three sections: local, state and federal. The issues within each section represent those issues the Columbus Chamber continues to advocate for with that respective level of government.

# LOCAL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: COLLABORATION IN THE COLUMBUS REGION

A goal of the Columbus Chamber is to work with our partners in local government to create the best business environment possible for the Central Ohio business community. The Columbus region is fortunate to have local officeholders that care about business. The Chamber hopes to continue this positive relationship to further evaluate and refine policies and programs, and address other locally important issues.

The Chamber will advocate for a business friendly climate that prioritizes the following issues at the local level:

## **Education**

Businesses depend upon a qualified workforce in order to thrive and are attracted to areas with a high performing educational system. Thoughtful and strategic educational reforms are needed to prepare children for personal success and to meet the current and future needs of the labor market.

*Action: Support the development of a community-based approach for improving education in Columbus which includes the Mayor, City Council president and business community in addition to the elected school board and community leaders.*

### Issue Activity:

With a commitment to bold action, the 25 members of the Columbus Education Commission agreed on recommendations to change the course of education in our community on April 26, 2013. All parts of the community will be asked to do their part, with community groups helping to expand pre-K education, parent groups mobilizing neighborhoods and businesses providing career pathways. While the November 2013 levy request may have failed, the collaborative conversation on improving the academic success of Columbus City school children continues to move forward.

### Chamber Activity:

- **Attended all the Columbus Education Commission (CEC) meetings;**
- **Garnered a resolution of support for the CEC's recommendations by the Government Affairs Steering Committee and the Columbus Chamber Board;**
- **Provided testimony before the Millage Committee on June 28, 2013 emphasizing the need for advancement of the priorities of the Commission, bold budget reduction goals reflecting the findings of the Commission's Operations Review Report, and an uncompromising policy that D and F rated schools will not be acceptable; and**
- **Continue to connect with district leadership including the newly elected school board members.**

*Action: Support the consideration of broad-based legislation within the Statehouse to improve Columbus City Schools and develop a legislative agenda suited to the unique needs of Columbus.*

#### [HB167](#)

House Bill 167 contains 3 provisions taken from the recommendations of the Columbus Education Commission. The law authorized a November ballot issue that would create an independent auditor for the Columbus City School District, allows a portion of levy proceeds to be shared with high performing charter schools and allows the Mayor to sponsor charter schools with the approval of city council.

#### **Chamber Activity:**

- Please see Education under State section of the Public Policy Agenda

#### **Small Business Assistance**

The Columbus Chamber recognizes that small business growth is imperative for the region to continue to grow and prosper. The Columbus Chamber will continue to serve as an advocate for policies that make it easier to do business with government in Central Ohio. The Columbus City Council's Small Business Roundtable is a valuable medium to vet issues and develop new means to assist small business growth.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will advocate for small business assistance including additional access to capital, increased access to city contracts, and easier navigation of government.*

#### **Issue Activity:**

The City of Columbus approved over \$1,700,000 for small business loans in 2013. The Small Business Roundtable continues to pursue support for businesses as they navigate government and simplifications to the contracting code.

#### **Chamber Activity:**

- Participates on the Columbus City Council's Small Business Roundtable; and
- Promotes outcomes and resources that the Small Business Roundtable creates to the business community.

#### **Development Services**

Key interactions businesses have with government include those around zoning and permitting. In these interactions, time, money, and predictability are important for all involved parties and are subjects that businesses looking to expand or relocate highly value.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will continue to advocate for online permitting, enhanced customer service, a physical one-stop-shop for development services, reliable turn-around times on permit applications, and consistent zoning by-laws and review processes for local Area Commissions.*

#### **Chamber Activity:**

- Convened for the first time a group of local organizations that represent and advocate for approximately 7,000 businesses in Columbus. The members of this

Business Coalition all value the advancement of improved technology, too and are working collaboratively to encourage city officials to take steps toward creating and updating these electronic capabilities.

- The City of Columbus' Department of Building and Zoning Services set enhancing customer service and furthering online permitting capabilities as their top two goals for 2014.

## Taxes

Taxes continue to be a concern with most business owners. The issue locally is not just the tax rate, but also the "layers" of taxation that businesses that operate in multiple jurisdictions encounter. Additionally, local governments should seek out efficiencies and cost savings including shared services.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will collaboratively identify and advocate for ways to reduce the layers of taxation and encourage local governments to evaluate shared service opportunities.*

### Chamber Activity:

- Participate on the Central Ohio Shared Services Steering Committee. The Committee includes municipalities and school districts and encourages shared services throughout the region;
- Continue to be a leader within the Municipal Tax Reform Coalition, pursuing state legislation as a way to create uniformity amongst jurisdictions in their taxing forms and definitions in legislation [HB 5](#). Please see Tax Reform under State section of the Public Policy Agenda
- Monitored and attended the Franklin County's Budget and Economic Advisory Panel meetings;
- Advocated to Franklin County officials to not raise the County's sales tax; and
- The Government Affairs Steering Committee and Chamber Board endorsed the City's 3013 Bond Package for broad community infrastructure needs which does not raise taxes.

## Funding Review Advisory Committee

Columbus City Council and Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman launched a joint effort and received recommendations on how the City can alter its non-income-tax revenues to fund the arts, tourism and human services. Funding these areas is imperative for creating a safe and vibrant City where economic growth can flourish.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will continue to advocate for solutions that use taxpayer dollars to fairly and adequately assist in funding the arts, tourism, and human services.*

### Issue Activity:

The Chamber has continued to be a proponent for additional funding for the tourism industry in order to compete in-line with similar cities in bringing additional visitors to the region. With the recommendation of the Funding Review Advisory Committee, the City of Columbus is working to adopt the two phase approach to pursue additional funding for [Experience](#)

[Columbus](#), the [Greater Columbus Arts Council](#), and [human services](#) without raising the bed tax itself to create a permanent, sustainable funding stream for all three of these important sectors of the community. Additionally, Experience Columbus is requesting additional funding from Franklin County.

## **Workforce Development**

A skilled workforce is the backbone of a productive and prosperous economy. Understanding employer's needs today and into the future is crucial information to ensure we have a ready workforce.

*Action: Support the evaluation of the current and future needs of the workforce as well as advocate for adequate investment, policies and programs to meet employer's workforce needs.*

## **Chamber Activity**

- **In partnership with Columbus City Council, the Chamber is creating a small business workforce survey to better understand the needs of small businesses with one to 50 employees. The survey will provide City Council with the information necessary to help improve and develop its small business programs. The survey is to be completed by summer 2014.**

## **Economic Development**

The Chamber works to collaborate with and support the efforts of MODE, Columbus 2020, Columbus Downtown Development Corporation, Columbus Next Generation Development Corporation and other economic development professionals to ensure business attraction and growth continues. The Chamber will also encourage local governments to focus job attraction incentives on net new jobs and investment in the region.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will support initiatives and programs that enhance the standard of living and overall economic health of the region and encourage local governments to focus job attraction incentives on net new jobs and investment in the region.*

## **Issues Activity:**

The Chamber will continue to advocate for additional resources to aid the attraction and recruitment of new business to the Region, especially as it relates to the funding of Columbus 2020. As Franklin County begins to frame its new \$5 million investment in job creation and strategic economic development efforts, the Chamber will work closely to provide information and guidance on the needs of business.

## STATE OF OHIO: OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Columbus Chamber is committed to advocating issues that are of concern to the business community. While many of these reforms were addressed during the 2011-2012 legislative session, and were supported by the Columbus Chamber, more needs to be accomplished to make Ohio, and Central Ohio “Open for Business.” Below are the statewide reforms for which the Columbus Chamber will advocate:

### Tax Reform Guidelines

To foster a better business climate in Central Ohio, grow our economic base and increase capital investment, the Columbus Chamber broadly supports the following concepts on tax reform:

Ohio’s personal income tax rates remain exceptionally high, especially when coupled with local jurisdiction add-ons that can take the rate as high as 10%. Surrounding states’ top rate include; Pennsylvania 3.07%, Michigan 4.35% and Indiana at 3.4%. A reduction in the top-rate of the personal income tax (currently 5.9%), must be sought in order to spur investment and capital investment particularly for small businesses.

Ohio’s tax laws, including at the municipal level, are outdated and not reflective of the state’s modern economy. Ohio must reform its tax laws in order to foster job creation and investment in our state. We must build a more entrepreneurial economy that fosters job growth.

A renewed effort on the simplification of the tax code to include reduction in complexity and number of taxes, and loopholes and an increase in compliance and revenue. This also should include a review of tax expenditures, with a focus on retaining those expenditures that have demonstrated a positive “return on investment” using a dynamic analysis approach. An amnesty period could also be made a part of this effort.

*Action: The Chamber will work with the Governor’s administration and the legislature to enact tax reform policies that are parallel to the Chamber’s tax reform guidelines.*

### Issue Activity:

During the most recent legislative session, major tax reform was debated in the State Budget bill (HB 59). During this time the Columbus Chamber successfully advocated the position of its members and the Public Policy Agenda. The Chamber was also actively involved in the drafting of the Municipal Tax Uniformity bill (HB 5) and the hearings in support of it. Below are the bill numbers which link to each bill as well as a short summary and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

PASSED:

[House Bill 59](#) *Ohio State Biennial Operating Budget*

Within the Operating Budget, there were significant tax reforms advocated for by the Columbus Chamber. These reforms included a 10% state income tax cut and a 50% small business tax cut on first \$250,000 of business income.

### Chamber Activity:

- Created a survey for Chamber members to determine what proposals they supported in the Governor’s budget.

- Shared the results of the survey with Governor's office, House Speaker's office and Senate President's office. Members supported the proposals of a state income tax cut and small business tax cut, but did not support the idea of expanding the sales tax base to those businesses providing services.
- Chamber team also provided testimony in the Senate conveying these survey results.
- Part of a coalition of other metro chambers that supplied additional reform recommendations from [Redesigning Ohio](#) that would allow for more savings to be put towards a larger state income tax cut. Ultimately, two of these recommendations were accepted into the Budget bill, means testing for the homestead exemption and the homeowners property tax rollback.
- Advocated in support of the tax reform to the Columbus region delegation, the Governor, House Speaker and Senate President to ensure these reforms were part of the final Budget bill.

PENDING:

#### [House Bill 5](#) *Municipal Tax Reform*

This bill would provide much needed municipal tax reform for businesses by providing uniformity for the filing forms and definitions for businesses. Currently in Ohio there are over 600 municipalities that use 300 different forms when filing municipal income taxes.

#### Chamber Activity:

- Actively involved with the drafting and advocacy of municipal tax reform.
- For the past 18 months, the Chamber has been part of the coalition of business groups.
- Participated in interested party meetings and coalition meetings.
- Provided written testimony
- Wrote an Op-Ed in the Columbus Dispatch
- Sent letters of support from Chamber members.
- Made HB 5 a Voter Education Guide "Key Vote" for the members of the Central Ohio delegation.

A substitute bill for HB 5 passed the Ohio House by a 56-41 bi-partisan vote. HB 5 has been assigned to the Senate Finance Committee. Hearings in committee began in the spring of 2014. The Chamber Government Relations team will continue to advocate for passage by the Senate Finance Committee and full Senate.

#### Healthcare

The hospital systems headquartered in Central Ohio are one of the largest employers in the Columbus region and have a major economic impact in our community. Leaders in the business community are intimately involved in many of the Boards of Directors of these hospitals, and the hospital systems' involvement in the Central Ohio community is a source of great pride for the Columbus region.

With the possibility of major reforms regarding healthcare in the next Ohio budget, the Chamber and its partners in the healthcare fields want to advocate for a focus on how to control healthcare costs while maintaining the quality of care, pay for performance and outcomes, as well as the continued push for advancement of the "Ohio Medical Corridor" connecting the health systems of Columbus with Cleveland and Cincinnati.



*Action: The Chamber will work with the Governor's administration and the legislature to enact sensible healthcare reforms.*

Issue Activity:

During the most recent legislative session healthcare was a major topic in the debate, specifically Medicaid expansion. The Columbus Chamber strongly advocated its position of supporting Medicaid expansion during the state budget debate in both the House and Senate. Below is a short summary and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

## **Medicaid Expansion**

This proposal would expand Medicaid coverage to an additional 275,000 Ohioans who fall between 100 and 138 percent of the poverty rate. Responsible Medicaid coverage presents a real opportunity to bend the healthcare cost curve by moving individuals into appropriate, lower-cost settings.

Chamber Activity:

- Advocated for the support of Medicaid expansion inclusion in the budget to the Ohio House and Senate delegation.
- Publicly endorsed Medicaid expansion in January 2013.
- Provided proponent testimony in the House and Senate by Chamber members
- Hosted a Medicaid expansion roundtable at Chamber Government Day
- Joint Op-Ed with the Greater Cleveland Partnership and Cincinnati Chamber that was published in the *Columbus Dispatch*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *Cincinnati Enquirer*
- Participated in numerous public rallies and media conference calls.
- Even though Medicaid expansion was taken out of the State Budget, the Chamber continued to advocate for a "stand-alone" bill on Medicaid expansion to pass in the fall legislative session.

Ultimately, Medicaid expansion was sent to the Controlling Board for acceptance of federal funding by Governor Kasich. The Controlling Board passed this request by a vote of 7-2.

## **Education**

According to a recent study, 41% of Ohio high school graduates entering a state college need to take a remedial course in Math or English and Ohio ranks 35th in the US in the rate of adults with at least a two-year associate's degree. The Central Ohio Compact, led by Columbus State Community College President David Harrison, has set a goal of increasing the rate of adults in Franklin County with at least a two-year degree from 44% in 2011 to 60% in 2025.

*Action: The Chamber will support policy changes that help local communities improve graduation rates in district and charter school high schools, community colleges and state universities, and increase the rate of students earning associates degrees and vocational certifications such as nursing.*

The academic performance of economically disadvantaged students, who now comprise 45% of Ohio's K-12 students, generally lags behind other students statewide. Both the state and federal departments of education provide additional funds to local schools to narrow this achievement gap. However, these state and federal dollars often do not follow the student to the school they attend.

*Action: The Chamber will support a “money follows the child” policy where state and federal dollars follow legislative intent and actually follow the student to the school they attend.*

Issue Activity:

During the most recent legislative session a number of education measures were debated within the state budget. The Columbus Chamber advocated its position of supporting additional focus on increasing graduation rates and the rate of students receiving two-year degrees; as well as advocating for policies that supported the “money follows the child” approach in state education to the House and Senate delegations. Below is a short summary with links to bills and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

PASSED:

[House Bill 59](#) *Ohio State Biennial Operating Budget*

House Bill 59 addresses both K-12 and higher education. The bill bases state funding for colleges on the number of students that complete their degree and limits in-state tuition and general fee increases, helping to foster higher graduation rates. It also sees that schools receive funds according to the classroom needs of its students, including students with disabilities, gifted students and students who are learning English as a second language.

Chamber Activity:

- **Advocated for policies that increase graduation rates and send funds to the classrooms that need it most.**

[House Bill 167](#) *The Columbus School Plan*

House Bill 167 contains 3 provisions taken from the recommendations of the Columbus Education Commission. The bill authorizes a November ballot issue that would create an independent auditor for the Columbus City School District, allows a portion of levy proceeds to be shared with high performing charter schools and allows the Mayor to sponsor charter schools with the approval of city council.

Chamber Activity:

- **Attended all Columbus Education Commission (CEC) meetings**
- **Created a resolution of support for the CEC recommendations that was approved by the Government Affairs Steering Committee and the Columbus Chamber Board.**
- **Three of these recommendations required State approval and were incorporated into House Bill 167.**
- **Drafted and expedited letters of support for HB 167 from eight Metro Chambers and the Chamber Small Business Council.**
- **Chamber President, Michael Dalby, provided proponent testimony before both the House and Senate committees.**
- **Education was highlighted with a roundtable at Government Day**
- **Members of the House and Senate were notified that HB 167 would be a “key vote” on our voter education guide.**

## Regulation Reform

In talking with businesses across the different industries and sizes, the need for regulation reform consistently ranks at the top of their biggest issues. These businesses point to regulations that impede business growth and increased hiring and stretch across a wide

array of issues, but most commonly mentioned are those over-reaching regulations coming from the Ohio EPA. While a number of reforms occurred with SB 294 in the last General Assembly session, more EPA regulation reform is needed to assist businesses in their efforts to grow.

Another area in need of reform is Ohio's workers compensation system. While some administrative reforms have occurred, significant legislative reforms to Ohio's workers' compensation system are still needed. The most immediate goal is to make reforms that allow business owners to pay smaller premiums. The long-term goal is to fundamentally reform the system so that Ohio regains its competitive balance.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will work with the Governor's administration, administration of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation and the Ohio legislature to advocate for these much needed reforms.*

## **Economic Development**

The Columbus Chamber's partnership with Columbus2020, which serves as the regional partner for JobsOhio, puts an emphasis on the importance of economic development to the Columbus Region. Some examples are the emerging industries of advanced manufacturing, energy, aviation and aerospace, health care, research, and health-tech. State programs such as the Clean Ohio Fund encourage redevelopment and revitalization of communities by providing grant funding for green space, farming, and cleaning up brownfields. As such, the Columbus Chamber will be advocating to create the best economic environment through public policy, as well as for sufficient support and funding from the state of Ohio.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will work with Columbus2020, administration and legislative leaders to ensure that JobsOhio is supported both legislatively and through sufficient funding sources.*

### Issue Activity:

Transfer of the state's wholesale liquor business to JobsOhio is complete and the legislature continues to look for ways to make Ohio the most desirable state for new and existing businesses to grow. Below is a short summary and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

PENDING:

### [House Bill 135](#) - *Industrial Site Rehabilitation*

HB 135 authorizes a nonrefundable tax credit for the rehabilitation of a vacant industrial site.

### Chamber Activity:

- **Facilitated and attended interested party meetings with the bill sponsor and Chamber members.**
- **Provided proponent testimony to the House Economic Development and Regulatory Reform Committee and the Senate Ways and Means Committee.**
- **Made Substitute HB 135 a "Key Vote" on the Voter Education Guide.**

The House passed HB 135 by a 94-0 vote. A substitute version of HB 135 is currently undergoing hearings in the Senate.

### [House Bill 59](#) - *Ohio State Biennial Operating Budget*

House Bill 59 provides the final \$52 million in appropriations that were previously authorized by voters.

**Chamber Activity:**

- **Signed onto joint letters of support with the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission to authorize the final round of the Clean Ohio Fund in both the House and Senate.**

*This was ultimately part of the final State Budget and signed into law.*

**Infrastructure Investments**

Infrastructure investments are vital to the strategy and development of job creation. While looking to maintain state funding for projects important to the Columbus region, the Chamber is also interested in examining alternative sources of funding, including the potential for monetizing infrastructure assets and private/public partnerships.

When the Columbus Chamber evaluates and supports infrastructure projects, it looks at the direct correlation to long-term economic development and job growth potential for the region. Infrastructure projects that the Columbus Chamber supports for funding include: the Pickaway East-West Connector, the I-270/US 33/SR 161 Interchange, I-270/SR 23 Interchange and the I-71/I-70/SR 315 Interchange.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will work with local, state and federal governments to secure and support funding sources.*

**Issue Activity:**

During this legislative session there was much discussion and debate about how to fund Ohio's badly needed infrastructure projects, including a study to explore leasing the Ohio turnpike. Below is a short summary and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

PASSED:

**[House Bill 51](#) - *Transportation Budget***

HB 51 Authorizes the Ohio turnpike to issue bonds backed by future toll revenue to fund transportation projects.

**Chamber Activity:**

- **Stressed the need for new transportation funding sources in all legislative meetings with members of the House and Senate.**
- **Drafted a letter to the Governor expressing support for the exploration of alternate funding sources for transportation projects, including the possible lease of the Ohio Turnpike. This letter was signed by nine metro chambers.**
- **Joined with other metro chambers to offer joint testimony in support of HB 51.**

**Workforce Development**

The importance of having a trained and skilled workforce has never been more evident than in the past couple years, where many businesses are having problems finding properly trained

workers for the thousands of job openings currently available in Central Ohio. Workforce initiatives should be all encompassing to not only focus on high school graduates but also the senior and displaced workforces and furthermore occur within local areas to match regional economies and labor markets. The Columbus Chamber will advocate for the aligning of the needs of businesses with colleges and training centers to create a “pipeline” of trained and skilled workers for businesses in Central Ohio. Additionally, the Chamber will advocate for revamping the job training landscape to unify the budget with policy making which creates flexibility and efficiency.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber will work with administrative and legislative officials to advocate for the most extensive reforms that strengthen the partnership between businesses and educational institutions to produce a skilled workforce.*

#### Issue Activity:

Several Bills were introduced that begin the process of revamping Ohio’s workforce development efforts. Below is a short summary and actions taken by the Columbus Chamber Government Relations team.

PASSED:

#### [Senate Bill 1](#) – *OhioMeansJobs Workforce Development Revolving Loan Fund*

SB 1 uses \$25 million in one-time casino licensing money to create a loan program that allows schools, colleges and career tech schools to access funding for workforce training initiatives.

#### [House Bill 1](#) – *One Stop Rebranding*

HB 1 requires all local workforce investment areas to use OhioMeansJobs as the local job placement system and renames county one stops.

#### Chamber Activity:

- **Emphasized the need for flexibility, efficiency and innovation in our workforce system in all legislative meetings with members of the House and Senate.**

#### **Redistricting Reform**

The current redistricting process calls for Ohio’s legislative districts to be redrawn by the state Apportionment Board and congressional districts to be redrawn by the legislature every 10 years following the U.S. Census to reflect population change. The state Apportionment Board is made up of three statewide office holders (governor, secretary of state and auditor) and two legislators (one each of the majority and minority party). This has led to several decades of debate regarding how political lines are redrawn throughout the state diverting time and attention away from other issues that directly impact the business community. The Columbus Chamber of Commerce embraces final resolution of reforming the current system of drawing legislative districts.

*Action: The Columbus Chamber supports sensible reforms to Ohio’s redistricting and reapportionment process that is accountable to Ohio voters that they can rely on for fair legislative and congressional districts. Furthermore, the Columbus Chamber urges the Legislature to work in a bi-partisan fashion to craft a workable redistricting plan over a timeline of milestones with final resolution of the issue in advance of the 2018 statewide races that would decide the members of the next Ohio Apportionment Board.*

# FEDERAL: PROVIDING THE TOOLS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND JOB CREATION

As our nation continues to work its way through the current economic situation, with limited ability to provide funding for a number of commitments and projects, it is the view of the Columbus Chamber that the Federal Government should concentrate on items that will help the nation's infrastructure and job creation.

Below are the projects that make up the Columbus Chamber's federal priorities that we will advocate:

## Transportation Infrastructure

With MAP-21 set to expire September 30, 2014, Congress will begin discussions on priorities to include in the next iteration of the surface transportation law during the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. Support a robust surface transportation reauthorization bill that includes funding for infrastructure surrounding intermodal facilities, such as the East West Connector at Rickenbacker and programmatic funding for priority projects in the Columbus region such as I-70/71 and US 33/I-270. In addition, support for Federal Transit Administration approval and funding for the Northeast Corridor Bus Rapid Transit project.

### Chamber Activity:

- **The Columbus Chamber will work with our congressional delegation to ensure Ohio and the Columbus Region can continue to improve infrastructure and all forms of transportation.**

## Health Care

Monitor the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for delivery system and financing reforms, expansions of eligibility, and funding opportunities. Seek out regulatory clarification as needed on matters impacting the financing, delivery and quality of care in Central Ohio. Work with the Ohio Congressional delegation and our federal partners to maximize federal funding to the Central Ohio region for prevention, public health and health workforce grants, as well as funding for health care providers that meet quality standards established by HHS and for the adoption of electronic health records.

### Chamber Activity:

- **The Columbus Chamber will monitor the reforms and try to identify potential funding opportunities and any potential issues that would affect our members. This pro-active approach will focus on a non-partisan community unified voice.**

## Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing will be a top priority for the Administration in its next term. The Administration recently launched the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership to invest in emerging technologies that support the advanced manufacturing sector. To coordinate the federal government's manufacturing policy and programmatic efforts, the President created the Office of Manufacturing Policy within the White House, which is co-chaired by the Director of the National Economic Council and the Secretary of Commerce. In addition, there

will be legislative opportunities to enhance the environment for manufacturing businesses, including potential tax reform and reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act.

**Chamber Activity:**

- **The Columbus Chamber will work with our congressional delegation to ensure Ohio and the Columbus Region can be a leader in advanced manufacturing.**

**Research & Development**

The Columbus region is home to several world class scientific and medical research facilities which attract billions of dollars in federal investment each year. Federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) support teams of scientists and engineers in the Columbus region that create novel technologies, form new companies, and develop life-saving treatments and cures. The Ohio State University was awarded nearly half-billion dollars in research awards in 2011. The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital is one of the top 10 NIH funded pediatric research facilities in the country, receiving \$26.6 million in NIH funding.

**Chamber Activity:**

- **The Columbus Chamber will work with our congressional delegation and federal partners to secure and protect federal research funding.**

**Education/Workforce**

Pursue federal funding and policy opportunities to implement the Central Ohio Compact's educational and workforce initiatives to align K-12, public and private higher education, business and industry, and community agencies in the Columbus region to achieve Columbus 2020 goals and create the most productive education network in America; and align workforce initiatives with the needs of regional employers and industries to create a model to be used throughout the state and country.

**Chamber Activity:**

- **The Columbus Chamber will work with our congressional delegation to attain federal funding and enact policy initiatives that align education and workforce efforts to create a national model in Columbus.**

**Support Central Ohio Defense Facilities in the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Process**

Every ten years or so, Congress and the Pentagon typically order our nation's defense installations to undergo a cost benefit-analysis known as the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Such a process results in unproductive or outdated bases and facilities being closed.

It will be critical to ensure that any federal legislation authorizing a BRAC process contains evaluation criteria that are not unfairly prejudicial to our region's military facilities such as the Defense Supply Center Columbus (DSCC) and portions of the Rickenbacker International Airport.

Likewise, if BRAC legislation is enacted, it will be important for our state and local officeholders to support a campaign that gathers data documenting the military value of our region's military facilities and then, in coordination with our Congressional delegation, communicates this military value to the Pentagon. During the last round of BRAC in 2005, our region came together to support a campaign that resulted in thousands of jobs being created primarily at DSCC.

**Chamber Activity:**

- The Columbus Chamber will work with our local and state office holders, in coordination with our Congressional delegation, to achieve the best possible resolution for the Columbus region during the BRAC process.