



Legislative Priorities 2023

Transportation

Transportation is crucial to Idaho's economy and further delays will not only strangle Idaho's economic vitality but will result in passing the problems to future generations. Accordingly, the Meridian Chamber of Commerce supports the following projects and funding mechanisms for transportation infrastructure:

- Construction of Linder overpass at I-84 to provide additional arterial north/south access through Ada County.
- Continue improvements to Highway 20/26 west of Eagle Rd. to reduce congestion, improve safety, and create economic opportunity for development
- Completion of State Highway 16 Extension to Highway 84/Central Valley Expressway and continue funding the connections from the new highway main east/west connections in Meridian.
- Using a multi-faceted approach to create alternative funding sources including registration fees, fuels taxes, local option taxes and other user fees
- Support the continuation of investigating other means to fund alternate transportation without negatively impacting the General Fund

Economic Development

The Meridian Chamber favors legislation that creates jobs, reduces regulation on businesses, encourages businesses to grow and prosper, and makes it easier for businesses to provide goods and services for our citizens and trade.

- Support the exploration of local based incentives
- Support local option tax authority and mechanisms for funding infrastructure associated with new growth including impact fees
- Support legislation that improves access to, and administration, of state liquor licenses.
- Support the Tax Reimbursement Incentive and its efforts to stimulate economic development

Taxes

The Meridian Chamber supports a tax structure which is fair, stable, provides adequately for those services the government must provide, and encourages investment by businesses and individuals in the growth of our economy.

- Support the review and potential elimination of sales tax exemptions
- Support state income tax rates to maintain competitiveness with other states
- Pursue a multipronged approach to property tax reform beyond shifting taxes from residential to commercial entities.
- Support business-friendly tax policies to help businesses grow and allow them to reinvest in Idahoans through job opportunities. These policies include elimination of the business personal property tax.

Education

The Meridian Chamber supports efforts to expand the capabilities of our K-12 schools to graduate all students with the necessary skills to successfully complete college and/or career/technical education (CTE), including emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). State supported colleges and universities need to provide the relevant curriculum and the trained workforce required if Idaho businesses are to effectively compete in the global marketplace.

- Support a mechanism for Idaho schools by which new growth contributes to the building needs associated with student enrollment
- Support the reduction of the “super majority” requirement to a 60% approval rate for the passage of local bond issues
- Support the increase in funding for each student from the state level and maintain the freedom for the school districts to use that funded as needed.
- Support education policies that will strengthen our workforce and build a talent pipeline for Idaho businesses by:
 - a. Expanding career technical education (CTE) appropriations to increase enrollment in Idaho’s technical education training centers and expand middle and high school CTE curriculum.
 - b. Support opportunities to expand early-childhood education.
- Support local public library district and its role in the community education process.

Local Government

The Meridian Chamber supports measures that enhance the amenities of our community to make Meridian a great place to live, work, and raise families.

- Protect the ability of communities to utilize Urban Renewal Districts and Auditorium Districts as a tool to fund growth and development needs in the community.
- Ensure that cities and counties have the necessary revenue to provide essential services

For more information on the Government Affairs Committee of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce and the efforts to advocate and support the interest of our business community please visit

<https://meridianchamber.org/government-affairs/>

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