



2021 Policy Priorities

Manufacturing is responsible for 12% – \$40.5 billion – of Missouri’s Gross Domestic Product. It ranks as one of the top industries that provides a strong, stable job market and brings direct and in-direct economic impacts to all areas of the state. Manufacturers have many shared policy concerns as other businesses, but also have some very different concerns that need specific approaches to confront head on. The Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry’s Manufacturing Alliance has outlined the following policy priorities to place these issues front and center at our states Capitol.

1. Workforce

Access to skilled, quality talent is the top issue facing all manufacturers regardless of size or geography. Workforce shortages and skills gaps limit Missouri manufacturer’s ability to perform at optimum levels, grow and prosper. The Missouri Chamber supports a broad-spectrum approach to upskilling and right-skilling our state’s workforce to help manufacturers excel and prosper.

2. Technology, Innovation and Automation

Support continuous improvement through technology and innovation across Missouri’s manufacturers. The Missouri Chamber supports a wide array of policies and efforts to drive investment, including restoring funding for the Missouri Technology Corporation (MTC), allocations to Missouri’s only National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) provider Missouri Enterprise and establishment of other programs that spur funding opportunities for research/development, startups, and business expansion in Missouri. The Missouri Chamber also rejects the notion of placing a tax on investments in automation by Missouri manufacturers.

3. Worker Safety

Protect and strengthen workers’ compensation reforms by ensuring that Missouri’s manufacturing employees are fairly and quickly compensated for workplace injuries. The Missouri Chamber supports reforms to the system to help reduce workers’ compensation insurance rates for Missouri’s manufacturers. These reforms should include proper validation of all claims and fairness in the system, clarifying the law where it has been subject to inconsistent judicial decisions.

4. Labor Reform

Support right-to-work efforts because employees should not be compelled to join a labor union or pay labor union dues as a condition of employment. The Missouri Chamber supports paycheck protection legislation that would require labor unions to give employees an opportunity each year to opt out of contributing a portion of their wages to union political activities.

5. Infrastructure and Logistics

Support a robust and efficient multimodal transportation infrastructure in order to ensure reliable inbound supply chain logistics and out bound goods to market. The Missouri Chamber recognizes adequate funding must be available for the maintenance and improvement of the state’s transportation system that includes roadways, freight rail lines, inland ports and air transport. The Missouri Chamber supports finding stakeholder-driven options that provide long-term,

sustainable multimodal transportation accessible to all. The Missouri Chamber supports innovative financing options, such as cost-sharing that empower and encourage communities to find local solutions to infrastructure needs.

6. Legal Climate

Covid-19 Liability Protections. Throughout the pandemic and under extraordinary circumstances, manufacturers produced personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to keep Missourians safe. Manufacturers of PPE should not face opportunistic products liability claims when they provided the necessary supplies for front-line workers to continue to care for sick patients or serve in a critical infrastructure supporting role.

Protections against frivolous lawsuits against Missouri Manufacturers that put products into the stream of commerce. Those businesses should not be exposed to liability because subsequent regulatory changes implicate previously designed and produced products. The Missouri Chamber supports a reasonable statute of repose that will bar claims against manufacturers for compliant products put into commerce that are the subject of later.

7. International Trade and Tariffs

Support balanced and free international trade agreements across the world that place Missouri manufacturers in a position to compete and prosper in today's global marketplace. These trade agreements should take into account worker protections, respect transparency, intellectual property, investment and product standards. The Missouri Chamber does not support an increase in US Tariffs with key trading partners that disproportionately hurt Missouri manufacturers and producers either on key inbound materials and products or on export goods.

8. Regulatory Climate

The Missouri Chamber supports a balanced and reasonable approach to environmental and energy regulation or policies that does not stifle innovation and economic growth nor add unnecessary and burdensome costs to Missouri's manufacturers. The Missouri Chamber opposes environmental regulations and policies for air, water, and waste that unduly raise costs for Missouri's manufactures or jeopardize creation, retention, or growth of Missouri jobs.

9. Energy Delivery

Support reliable, resilient, and affordable energy options for Missouri Manufactures in the areas of natural gas, propane, electricity, and water. We support efforts to address Missouri's aging infrastructure while ensuring natural gas, propane, electricity, and water remain reliable at predictable and affordable rates for manufacturers. We also support grid modernization efforts that drive greater resiliency, rate affordability, and economic development opportunities.

10. Cyber Security and IP Protection

Recognize proactive, comprehensive cybersecurity practices are needed in both the private and public sectors. The Missouri Chamber opposes onerous and prescriptive cybersecurity standards that make attacks more difficult for businesses to prevent and mitigate in a rapidly-changing environment. We support industry-driven initiatives that are adaptable and effective in protecting businesses and critical infrastructure from cybersecurity threats.

Respect and protect the intellectual property rights of Missouri's manufacturers. This should come with an understanding and upholding of core standards that prohibit discriminatory, unfair treatment and theft of private, intellectual property and proprietary processes from domestic or foreign entities.