



MISSOURI CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

2022-2023 GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS TEAM





# KARA CORCHES

Vice President of Governmental Affairs,  
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

[kcorches@mochamber.com](mailto:kcorches@mochamber.com)

As the Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Kara Corches advocates for a wide variety of issue areas for the business community, including agriculture, education, energy, health care, tech, and workforce development. Most recently Corches launched the Missouri Chamber Technology Alliance, an initiative to unite Missouri's technology community behind a statewide, data-driven, solutions-oriented strategy of policy and programs to maximize Missouri's position as an emerging tech hub.

Before joining the Missouri Chamber, Corches was chief lobbyist for the California Optometric Association in Sacramento for several years. She also worked in political affairs at the California Farm Bureau Federation. Prior to her entry into state-level politics and advocacy, Corches worked at the federal level in Washington, D.C., for the American Medical Association and a member of Congress. In her various roles, she has developed expertise in political action committee fundraising and management as well as mobilizing networks of grassroots advocates.

Corches earned a master's degree in public policy and administration from California State University, Sacramento, where she conducted original research on Medicaid policy. She also holds a bachelor's degree in speech communication from Baylor University.

## FOCUS AREAS:

### WORKFORCE

- Workforce programs
- Apprenticeships
- Education
- Child care

### PUBLIC SAFETY

- Crime reduction
- Second chance hiring
- Public safety workforce

### TECHNOLOGY

- Missouri Technology Alliance
- Cybersecurity
- Innovation
- Technology manufacturing

### ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT

- Utilities — energy, water, telecommunications
- Department of Natural Resources

### ELECTIONS

- Missouri Chamber Political Institute



# PHILLIP ARNZEN

Director of Legislative Affairs,  
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

[parnzen@mochamber.com](mailto:parnzen@mochamber.com)

Phillip Arnzen has extensive experience working in Missouri government and political campaigns. Prior to joining the Chamber, he worked in the Governor's Office handling legislative affairs. During his time in this role he helped the Governor secure increased infrastructure funding, invest in job training and workforce development programs, and address public safety.

Before working in the Governor's Office he handled legislative affairs at the Missouri Department of Economic Development and worked in a leadership office in the Missouri House of Representatives. He also has experience on political campaigns from the local level up to statewide races and everything in between. This background allows Phillip to specialize in transportation, infrastructure, tax and economic development issues.

He graduated from the University of Missouri has a bachelor's degree in financial planning and currently lives in Columbia, Missouri.

## FOCUS AREAS:

### TRANSPORTATION/ INFRASTRUCTURE

- Funding
- Regulatory
- Highways, rail, air, ports

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Business attraction/retention programs
- Entrepreneurship and small business
- Broadband
- Gaming

### ELECTIONS

- Initiative petition reform

### TAX

- Corporate and personal income tax
- Property tax
- Employee stock ownership plans



# HEIDI GEISBUHLER SUTHERLAND

Director of Legislative Affairs,  
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

[hsutherland@mochamber.com](mailto:hsutherland@mochamber.com)

Heidi Geisbuhler Sutherland joined the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry's governmental affairs team in 2022. As Director of Legislative Affairs for the Missouri Chamber, Sutherland specializes in health care, tort reform, budget, and labor issues.

Sutherland has over a decade of experience working in and around the Missouri State Capitol. Prior to joining the Chamber team, Sutherland served as the Director of Government Relations for the Missouri State Medical Association. She also worked in the Missouri State Senate as a legislative staffer in a variety of roles, including chief of staff, caucus policy director, and legislative assistant.

Sutherland has a bachelor's degree in philosophy and religion from Truman State University. She lives in Jefferson City with her husband.

## FOCUS AREAS:

### LEGAL REFORM

- Legal system policy
- Amicus briefs
- Courts

### BUDGET

- State budget

### ELECTIONS

- Political Action Committee

### LABOR/HR

- Unemployment Insurance
- Worker's comp
- Marijuana implications for workplaces
- Workplace policies

### HEALTH CARE

- Access to care
- Insurance
- Telehealth



# BRENDAN COSSETTE

Chief Operating Officer,  
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

[bcossette@mochamber.com](mailto:bcossette@mochamber.com)

Brendan Cossette has served as the Chief Operating Officer of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the state's largest business association representing more than 50,000 Missouri employers, since 2015.

Prior to his current role with the Chamber, Cossette lobbied for the Missouri Primary Care Association and the Chamber. He also served as Chief of Staff to two Presidents Pro Tem in the Missouri Senate and General Counsel of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Additionally, he led a health focused economic development nonprofit in Kansas City and practiced law in his hometown of Rolla, Missouri.

Cossette has a bachelor of arts and a juris doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He became a member of the The Missouri Bar in 2001, licensed to practice in Missouri for more than 20 years.

## BACKGROUND:

### HEALTH CARE



# DANIEL P. MEHAN

President and CEO,  
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

[dpmehan@mochamber.com](mailto:dpmehan@mochamber.com)

As president and CEO of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dan Mehan leads Missouri's foremost advocacy group for job growth and economic expansion. Dan and the Missouri business community are currently implementing a 15-year strategic plan called *Missouri 2030: An Agenda to Lead*. The Missouri 2030 plan includes components to improve Missouri's workforce preparation, economic competitiveness, job-supporting infrastructure and business leadership. Learn more at [MO2030.com](http://MO2030.com). Under Dan's leadership, the Missouri Chamber was named the 2019 State Chamber of the Year by the Council of State Chambers.

Dan's work extends to serving on several boards and commissions aimed at bringing economic growth to Missouri, including the Midwest Hub Commission and the Missouri Hawthorn Foundation. Prior to joining the Missouri Chamber, Dan worked for Washington University in St. Louis. He has also been involved in several statewide and regional campaigns. He was a staff assistant to former U.S. Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond.

A Missouri native who grew up in St. Louis, Dan has a bachelor's in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. He lives in Jefferson City with his wife Ellen and their two daughters, Cecilia and Katy.

## BACKGROUND:

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT