




# MISSOURI|2030

*An Agenda to Lead*

**2016–2024 PROGRESS**

**MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

**On the pages that follow, you will find the original Missouri 2030 data and plan. We wanted this plan to be a living document, not just another plan gathering dust on a shelf. So, where we have made progress we have noted it with this symbol  PROGRESS! and an explanation. As you will see, our progress has been significant. And we will not stop until Missouri achieves its full economic potential.**

# MISSOURI 2030 DRIVERS



The framework of the agenda is built around five drivers:

1

**Preparing the Workforce**  
(Page 4-7)

2

**Competing for Jobs**  
(Page 8-13)

3

**Connecting through Infrastructure**  
(Page 14-17)

4

**Uniting the Business Community**  
(Page 18-19)

5

**Protecting Health and Safety**  
(Page 20-23)

These priorities focus on the fundamentals of a successful economy. If Missouri can lead in these areas, we will be an economic force that will provide more opportunities and an improved quality of life for Missourians.

Turning around the trends in these critical areas will take time. **Missouri 2030** is a long-term agenda for continued improvement. By the time we reach 2030, the Missouri General Assembly will have seen several generations of legislators and at least four different governors come and go due to term limits. **Missouri 2030** will provide continuity throughout these political changes. **Missouri 2030** will provide the structure and goals that Missouri's business community and other stakeholders can endorse and work together to achieve.



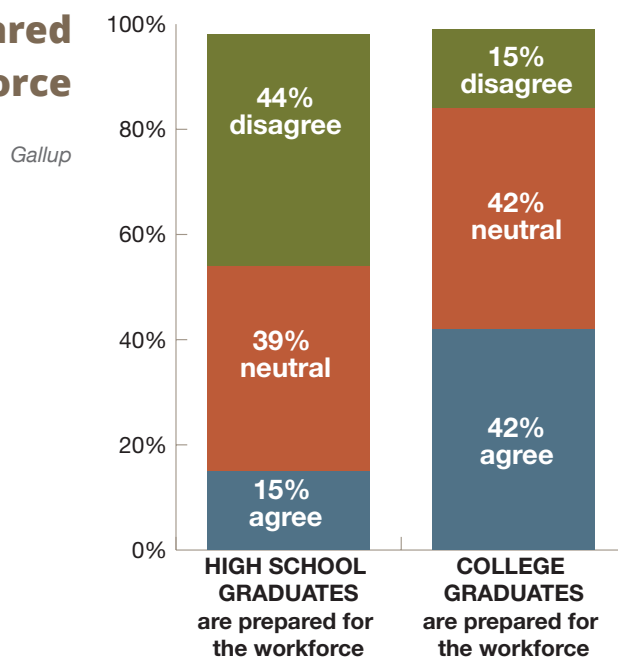
# Preparing the Workforce

## WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALED:

Through our Gallup research, we heard clearly that we need to invest in Missouri's workforce. Only 44 percent of Missouri business owners are satisfied with the state's availability of skilled workers. Employers cited weaknesses in the state's ability to prepare, attract and retain workers. According to the Gallup survey:

- Only 15 percent of Missouri business owners agree that high schools are preparing students for the workforce.
- Only 42 percent of Missouri businesses agree that colleges provide preparation for the workforce.
- Only 30 percent of Missouri business owners agree that Missouri attracts the top talent.
- Only 30 percent of Missouri business owners agree the state is able to retain top talent.

## Prepared Workforce



One-on-one interviews with the CEOs from some of the state's largest employers mirrored the responses from the Gallup survey. More than 90 percent felt that actions to improve education and workforce preparedness were absolutely necessary.

While a major issue for existing businesses, workforce also is a key for attracting new jobs to the state. Gallup followed up the survey with business leaders to conduct in depth interviews with site selection consultants. Through these interviews, site selectors told Gallup:

- It is increasingly difficult for manufacturers to find skilled and semi-skilled labor, such as machinists, welders and maintenance technicians. Demand for these positions is outstripping supply.
- The site selectors praised community colleges and other higher education institutions, but believe that Missouri is not effectively promoting the social and economic value of industrial careers that may not require two and four year degrees.
- The site selectors interviewed also recommended that Missouri look to other states that have implemented training grants and reimbursement programs.

Another indicator of workforce strength analyzed by the Missouri Chamber Foundation was the status of 25-44 year olds. This population sector in Missouri is decreasing at three times the rate as the national average.

Addressing the top concern of workforce will require a new focus on the demand side of worker training. A demand-driven approach, according to Dr. Michael

Porter, "is made up of the public and private sector policies and programs that help people acquire the knowledge and skills needed to earn a living."

By focusing on the demands of business, this type of approach allows local citizens and service providers to understand the opportunities that exist for current and future employment and what specific skills are necessary to take advantage of those opportunities.

### **HOW MISSOURI 2030 CAN HELP MISSOURI BETTER PREPARE:**

No other issue is of more concern for businesses today. Missouri must improve the education system at all levels and integrate the skills needed by business into every curriculum. Gallup reported that a common sentiment was "unless Missouri changes the way we are preparing people for the jobs of the future, the current mismatch between employer skill needs and the talents of the workforce will widen." Systemic education reform is needed, but it will take years. Therefore, initiatives that work around the current system must also be made available to help employers in the short term.

**"The community colleges have outstanding technical programs but we are not getting the throughput. It needs to be pushed to students, parents, teachers and adults with influence in their lives ... we are not effectively promoting the social and economic value of industrial careers ... we need a PR campaign ... we need to make this a cool thing to do."**


Site Selector

## Preparing the Workforce


**Goal:** Increase the voice of business and industry on education and workforce issues at the state and national policy levels


### Action steps


- Hire a dedicated governmental affairs liaison to address workforce needs.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2015, the Missouri Chamber realigned its governmental affairs staff to provide a greater focus on workforce legislation. The result has been steady passage of strong workforce development legislation, including advancement of career and technical education, computer science education, apprenticeships, STEM career awareness and child care support legislation, to name a few.


- Advocate policy that competitively funds our K-12 and higher education systems, implements much-needed reforms, provides better support for high-performing teachers and administrators, and sets higher standards for Missouri students.

 **PROGRESS!** After decades of budget cuts to higher education and underfunding the K-12 foundation formula, lawmakers turned the tide and have restored funding to higher education and are currently fully funding the foundation formula.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature raised the baseline teacher salary to \$38,000, the first increase in nearly two decades.


 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature invested \$81 million to expand access to pre-kindergarten education programs.

**Goal:** Optimize existing training programs and find innovative solutions to address gaps


 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri General Assembly passed legislation championed by the Missouri Chamber to create a new “Upskill Credential” workforce competitive grant reimbursement program to incentivize employers to “build their own talent” by upskilling employees with short term credentials in needed areas.


### Action Steps

- Hold an annual training conference that brings together business leaders, community leaders, economic developers and workforce development professionals to share best practices and to align goals.

 **PROGRESS!** The Workforce2030 Conference has been held for the last four years. It is the only event of its kind in the state that draws together hundreds of business leaders, workforce developers and educators to identify ways to align goals and better train our future workforce.

- Advocate for more effective use of state and federal training funding.


 **PROGRESS!** In 2019, Missouri One Start was established. It's a customized training program that provides eligible companies with resources to train or upskill their employees according to specific workforce needs.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2024, the Missouri Chamber successfully advocated for \$3 million in funding for upskill credential grant program for employers.

**Goal:** Align workforce needs with outcomes from Missouri's education systems by facilitating research and collaboration between business leaders, educators, policymakers and workforce development professionals


### Action Steps

- Create an alliance called “Missouri 2030: Workforce” consisting of business leaders, educators and workforce development professionals charged with the creation of an actionable plan to address the gap between workforce supply and demand.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber created the Workforce Alliance, which helped define early workforce development policy proposals and also directed the creation of the Workforce2030 Conference.




- Commission a study/survey to identify gaps between student achievement and employer needs.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2018, the Missouri Chamber Foundation published Workforce2030. The study provided more than 30 recommendations that the state could take to improve how we train our future workforce. These recommendations became a blueprint for major workforce development legislative achievements in 2019 and beyond.


## **Goal:** Increase the number of students considering technical employment, STEM and other targeted employment sectors

### **Action Steps**

- Develop timely and informative, age-appropriate industry and occupation materials for students in middle and high school that also reference various educational and training pathways.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation has developed several impactful programs to expose students to exciting careers in STEM and technical fields. Among these successful outreach programs are STEM Signing Day, Manufacturing Day and Health Care Career Day.


- Invest in paid media, earned media, public service announcements and a social media campaign in targeted regions of Missouri.
- Develop partnerships to channel information to students, parents and employers.

 **PROGRESS!** Since 2015, the Missouri Chamber Foundation has built numerous channels to deliver career information to students, parents and employers.

## **Goal:** Expand relevant work experience opportunities throughout the education system

### **Action Steps**


- Build a system to promote internship opportunities to Missouri's employers, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, students and parents.


 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation has created two free online portals that connect employers and

students for internships and apprenticeship opportunities. Each year, the site reaches hundreds of students and adults looking to upskill their careers.


- Expand apprenticeship opportunities in high-demand fields.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation received a \$6 million grant from the Department of Labor in 2020. We are providing funding directly to IT employers to create or expand apprenticeships and are committed to training more than 5,300 IT apprentices. The Missouri Chamber has also successfully advocated for numerous pieces of legislation to expand access to apprenticeship opportunities.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Chamber received an additional \$4.3 million to expand our apprenticeship model to health care and train an additional 1,500 apprentices.


 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature enacted legislation to provide tax credits to employers that offer new internships and apprenticeships.

- Develop communication channels with high school counselors to encourage students to take rigorous courses and pursue relevant career pathways.

 **PROGRESS!** The innovative Show-Me Careers externship program creates new, deep ties between education and the business community, helping educators inform their students about great local career opportunities.

## **Goal:** Address child care shortages keeping working parents out of the workforce

- Provide data that helps frame the issue and allows for productive policy action.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber co-authored a study with the U.S. Chamber that elevated the need to address child care shortages. This study spurred debate to provide employers with incentive to provide child care benefits to employees. It also set the stage for investment in child care facilities to expand access.

# Competing for Jobs

## WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALED:

Without a competitive business climate, Missouri cannot win the global war for economic prosperity. Gallup dug deeply into key areas that impact Missouri's business climate. Gallup found that less than one in four employers is satisfied with Missouri's litigation climate, tax environment or government regulations.

Specifically, in the area of tax, the Gallup survey revealed that 10 percent of businesses in Missouri believe that Missouri's tax environment is their biggest obstacle to growth. That statistic is slightly higher than a national survey conducted by Gallup-Wells Fargo, which put that number at 7 percent.

Gallup's research found that employers were not as concerned about the tax rate as the consistency of Missouri's tax laws. Gallup concluded that "the inconsistency of Missouri's tax policy is perceived as a major issue, with 1 in 5 business owners agreeing policies are stable enough to allow for year-to-year growth planning. Construction, wholesale trade, and health care industries reported even more concern over tax inconsistency than other industries overall.

Interviews with site selectors revealed a similar concern. While generally complimentary of Missouri's tax incentive programs, site selectors were worried that the programs' administrative complexity could be holding back some opportunities for Missouri. "The time and effort that go into applying for the incentives can normalize the value of the incentive package except in very large deals," commented one site selector interviewed.

Like taxes, a state's labor policy has a direct impact on employers' bottom lines. The Gallup survey revealed that Missouri employers are also concerned about labor policy. The majority of business leaders Gallup surveyed, 54 percent, favors Missouri becoming a



Right-to-Work state. Support for this policy change was even higher in some industry sectors, such as Transportation, Communications, and Utilities, where 67 percent supported becoming a Right-to-Work state.

Labor policy also plays a large role in a state's ability to recruit new business. Site selectors also stated that becoming a Right-to-Work state would benefit Missouri. One site selector commented that "Missouri's prospect flow on manufacturing is only 60 percent of what it would be if it was Right-to-Work."

Gallup also surveyed employers about the impact of health care costs on their businesses. The vast majority (80 percent) of businesses reported that their health care costs will increase significantly in upcoming years. Seventy one percent cited that these increases will impede their companies' abilities to grow. Yet, very few businesses, only 5 percent, cited health care as their biggest obstacle to growth.

Some of Gallup's findings identified strengths in this area. Missouri businesses rate their access to key inputs to their business' success relatively

high as compared to other questions in the survey, with over half reporting satisfaction with availability of credit, affordability of land, access to customers, and business networking opportunities.

**"Missouri's prospect flow on manufacturing is only 60 percent of what it would be if it was Right-to-Work."**

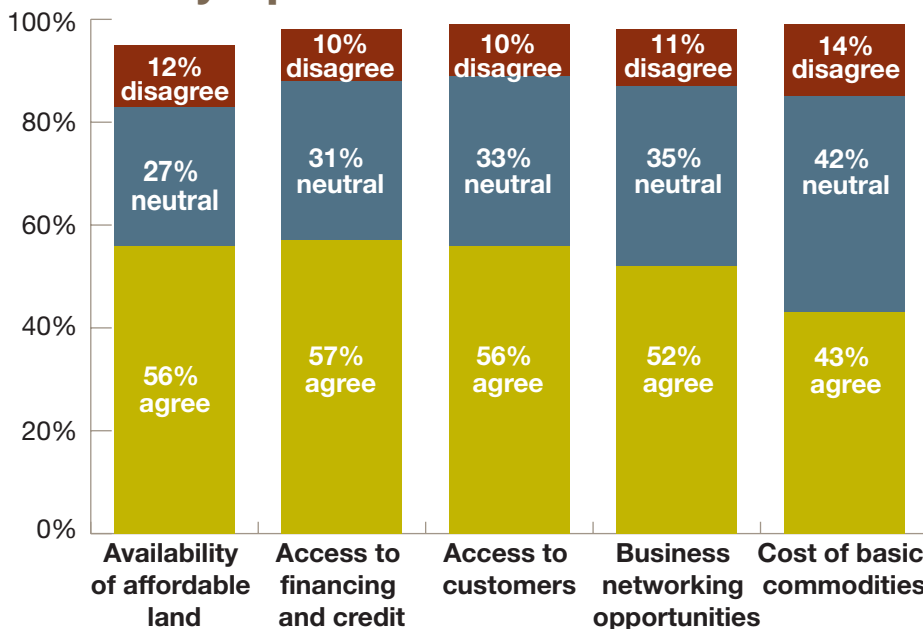
Site Selector

## HOW MISSOURI 2030 CAN HELP MISSOURI BETTER COMPETE:

Gallup's research has identified several factors in our business climate that Missouri can address. Simplicity, predictability, transparency and efficiency should guide future policy. The Missouri Chamber has long been considered the most influential business advocacy group in Missouri's capitol. Missouri 2030 will make that lobbying team even stronger with additional advocacy resources and tools. More and more, due in a large part to term limits, public policy is circumventing the legislature and instead is being made through government agencies and in the courts. Missouri 2030 arms the Missouri Chamber with the

support it needs to become a stronger presence in these areas.

### Key Inputs for Missouri Businesses




Missouri 2030 also puts a strong focus on policies to support entrepreneurship and innovation. Research consistently shows that a large percentage of job growth emanates from fast-growing, young companies. By minimizing regulatory costs and maximizing available capital, these companies can be nurtured and allowed to grow.


**Goal:** Continue to aggressively monitor Missouri's business climate and advocate for improvements in the areas of tax policy, legal environment, unemployment insurance and workers' compensation systems, labor, health care and other factors impacting business competitiveness

### Action Steps


- Maintain the strongest advocacy team for business in Jefferson City by providing cutting-edge support resources.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber has the strongest pro-jobs lobbying team in the state.


- Develop targeted research studies to support advocacy efforts on key issues.

 **PROGRESS!** The most significant economic legislation that has passed since 2015 can be tied to Missouri 2030 recommendations and subsequent research studies, including Workforce2030, Technology2030, Transportation2030 and Safer Missouri, Stronger Missouri.


- Invest in annual statewide issue polls.

 **PROGRESS!** We have hired nationally recognized pollsters to survey Missouri CEOs annually to inform our legislative priorities.

- Invest in communications tools and campaigns to keep employer members, legislators, media and the general public engaged in pro-jobs policymaking.

 **PROGRESS!** Each year the Missouri Chamber invests in communication campaigns to inform stakeholders about our work in the Capitol and state agencies. We have also developed an online dashboard that features the latest economic metrics to hold policymakers accountable. We invest in multiple public-facing social media ads on key issues.

**Goal:** Keep Missouri's corporate taxes competitive and guarantee consistency


 **PROGRESS!** A tax cut championed by the Missouri Chamber in 2018 and fully phased in by 2020 gave Missouri the second-lowest corporate tax rate in the nation.

- Conduct a comprehensive study of Missouri's state budget, including a 15-year projection of expected revenue growth and spending, to use in setting long-term tax policy.
- Commission an analysis of Missouri's tax code by leading tax professionals and present an actionable list of recommendations that can be legislated.
- Conduct annual state-by-state comparisons of tax levels.

**Goal:** Become a model state for fair and balanced resolution for injured workers and unemployed workers while lowering transaction costs of the workers' compensation and unemployment insurance systems

### Action Steps


- Tap into the expertise of corporate defense attorneys among Missouri Chamber membership through the Missouri Chamber Legal Foundation to help monitor legal decisions and other factors impacting Missouri's workers' compensation and unemployment insurance systems.
- Provide legal white papers through the Missouri Chamber Legal Foundation to help Missouri employers stay in compliance with changes in the law.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber has greatly enhanced our outreach via statewide webinars on timely topics such as employment law, succession planning, medical marijuana, unemployment claims and COVID-19 litigation.


## Goal: Improve Missouri's corporate litigation environment

### Action Steps


- ▶ Expand manpower for the Missouri Chamber Legal Foundation to increase advocacy strength, engage in the judicial selection process and intervene in corporate legal cases.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2015, Missouri Chamber realigned its governmental affairs staff to better focus on tort reform issues.

- ▶ Perform a state-by-state analysis of key legal reforms (employment law, comparative fault, punitive judgments, evidentiary standard) and implement a plan to align Missouri with states that have more balanced, competitive litigation climates.
- ▶ Invest in research to analyze the impact of Missouri's unbalanced tort system on our economy to support advocacy efforts. Compare Missouri with other states in numbers of corporate suits filed, cases settled pretrial and cases filed in state and federal courts, among other data.
- ▶ Build an alliance of Missouri's corporate counsels and convene regularly to develop a common action plan and path toward meaningful legal reforms.
- ▶ Establish an aggressive public relations plan to support legal reform efforts.

 **PROGRESS!** The ongoing Stop Job-Crushing Lawsuits and Stop COVID Lawsuits campaigns aided in the passage of significant legal climate reforms in recent years.


- ▶ Build a database that tracks political contributions from trial attorneys to elected officials and invest in a paid and earned media campaign and social media to publicize.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2016, the Missouri Chamber Foundation created Money Trail, an online resource that tracks trial attorney political contributions to provide more transparency.


## Goal: Implement labor reforms

### Action Steps

- ▶ Monitor labor activity in other states and build resources to enact competitive labor reforms.
- ▶ Invest in a strong grassroots campaign and media plan to enact labor reforms.

 **PROGRESS!** Missouri passed right-to-work legislation in 2017. That legislation was reversed by a vote of the people the following year.


- ▶ Build a database that tracks political contributions from unions to elected officials and invest in a paid and earned media campaign and social media to publicize.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2016, the Missouri Chamber Foundation created Money Trail, an online resource that tracks union political contributions to provide more transparency.


## Goal: Improve access to quality, cost-effective health care

### Action Steps

- ▶ Enact strong Medicaid reforms.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber supported common-sense Medicaid expansion in 2020 that ensures that Missouri provides this safety net to citizens in need without putting undue burden on taxpayers.

- ▶ Build resources to support advocacy for medical malpractice caps.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2015, after decades of failed attempts, Missouri passed medical malpractice caps, helping stem the tide of doctors leaving our state due to high insurance costs.

- ▶ Research methods to provide transparency in the health care system.


*continued*

*continued*

**Goal:** Improve access to quality, cost-effective health care

### Action Steps


- Research market-driven solutions to reduce small-employer health care costs.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2017, the Missouri Chamber began providing the Chamber Benefit Plan to small employers. The Chamber Benefit Plan insurance product pools small employers from around the state to drive down health insurance costs for their employees. The plan currently has 3,700 participants covering 40,000 lives.


**Goal:** Foster entrepreneurship and innovation

### Action Steps

- Provide annual regional entrepreneur networking events.
- Proactively identify students and residents with entrepreneurship talent who are most likely to start a new business. Work with schools and universities to develop the interest, skills and partnerships needed to capitalize on this talent.
- Conduct an annual tax policy review to maximize the benefits for startup and high-growth companies.
- Expand flexible capital formation through policies that encourage new market tax credits, venture capital, angel networks and crowdfunding.
- Promote collaborative industry and higher education research and development to increase our ability to commercialize research projects.


 **PROGRESS!** Through the formation of the Missouri Technology Alliance, we have provided a forum for industry and higher education to meet and collaborate.

**Goal:** Identify economic areas of strength and leverage through collaboration and strategic policy, including agriculture, banking, energy, finance, insurance, health care, manufacturing and technology sectors

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber helped to secure a new state budget \$15 million line item in 2022 and 2023 to help onshore semiconductor and active pharmaceutical ingredient high-tech manufacturing, which is vital for our national security.

### Action Steps

- Build alliances of the state's leading companies and experts for each of these sectors to collaborate and develop actionable plans for growth.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber has created a Manufacturing Alliance and a Technology Alliance to engage our members and support projected growth in these areas. We also helped form the bipartisan Missouri Legislative Innovation and Technology Caucus to maximize growth of the tech and innovation sectors through policy.

**Goal:** Protect Missouri's military bases, defense contractors and defense agencies and the contributions of these organizations to our economy

### Action Steps


- Produce educational materials that identify the economic impact of Missouri's military bases, defense contractors and defense agencies and use as tools to unify the business community, state and federal policymakers, and other stakeholders in an effort to protect our Department of Defense assets.
- Deploy a public relations campaign to shore up support and understanding of the role the military bases, defense contractors and defense agencies and companies that support the military play in Missouri's economy.

**Goal:** Increase the number of veterans and family members that we retain in Missouri's workforce after service and encourage retired military to choose Missouri as a permanent residence

### Action Steps

---

- ▶ Deploy an education campaign among Missouri Chamber Federation members to enact veteran-friendly policy and programs in their communities.
- ▶ Provide educational materials to policymakers and lawmakers to build the case for more veteran-friendly policies that will encourage more veterans to stay in Missouri after service.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2020 the Missouri Legislature passed reciprocity legislation that makes it easier for military veterans and spouses to be employed in Missouri.


- ▶ Support an effort to build a statewide portal of support groups, programs and services available to veterans and their families.
- ▶ Work with military bases and the business community to strengthen communication and bridge opportunities for veterans and their families.
- ▶ Work with military bases to provide annual meetings for spouses of service men and women to make them aware of work opportunities in communities where they are stationed.

**Goal:** Protect Missouri employers from cyber crimes

### Action Steps

---

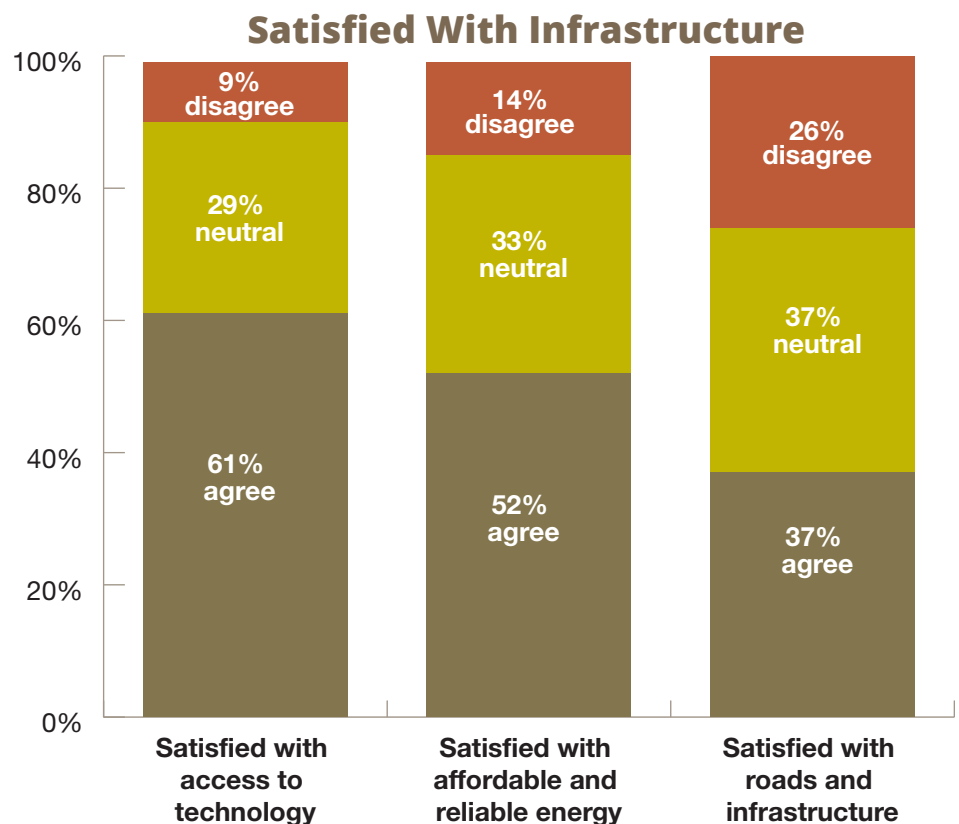
- ▶ Advocate for incentive funding to help Missouri small employers protect against cyber crime and provide training to small businesses most at risk of cyber attacks.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Chamber partnered with Cortex to create a small business cybersecurity training program.

# Connecting through Infrastructure

## WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALED:

Gallup's research also focused on the infrastructure that Missouri's business community needs to grow and be competitive. The research revealed that basic infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, is a prevalent concern of employers, especially industries that depend on roads and airports for the movement of goods. Gallup concluded that, "business owners that operate day-to-day in the state feel aging infrastructure as an increasing challenge for their operations." Respondents were 61 percent satisfied with their access to technology as compared to only 37 percent satisfaction with basic infrastructure, including roads. Transportation was one of the few areas where responses differed based on geography. The Gallup



Gallup

research showed that business owners in the St. Louis area were more satisfied with transportation infrastructure than those in other areas of the state.

The site selectors interviewed by Gallup were quick to cite location as a strength for Missouri. One stated, “Especially in manufacturing, my decision is made 65 percent by logistics and supply chain dynamics. Customers are expecting their goods faster and faster and shipping times are decreasing.”

Another site selector commented, “Missouri has so many strengths by default in its central location and needs to take better advantage of these.”

Gallup concluded that leveraging Missouri’s location through strategic policy making and investment would be a smart move for the state.

## **HOW MISSOURI 2030 CAN HELP MISSOURI CONNECT:**


Missouri has always enjoyed a logistics advantage due to its central location, navigable rivers and strong railroad and interstate highway systems. Infrastructure for the future, including global and domestic air connectivity, passenger rail, public-transit service to improve employee mobility, digital coverage and speed can position Missouri as a hub for commerce in the Midwest. At the same time, Missouri enjoys low energy costs. This is an asset that Missouri must actively protect and promote.




**Goal:** Protect Missouri's advantage as a low-cost-energy and -utility state

### Action Steps

- ▶ Engage in legislative, agency and legal activity that impacts energy production and distribution.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2018, Missouri passed a law that authorizes electric utilities to spend \$1 billion in needed grid updates to protect our energy supplies while reducing rates and capping rates for consumers. In addition, we helped pass a variety of laws that spur investment in energy and water infrastructure in each legislative session.


- ▶ Work with business leaders, energy providers and community leaders to establish a collaborative, long-term plan to address Missouri's aging infrastructure and future energy and utility needs.

 **PROGRESS!** To publish the Transportation2030 report, the Missouri Chamber took a comprehensive approach and engaged stakeholders across Missouri to develop a plan to support the future of our vital transportation infrastructure.


**Goal:** Develop a competitive advantage in broadband coverage and speed

### Action Steps

- ▶ Work with communities, state and local governments, and broadband providers to stimulate broadband use.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber played a key role in state-level discussions with broadband providers and other stakeholders on Missouri's broadband investment and deployment.


- ▶ Minimize regulations and rules that impede the deployment.
- ▶ Support grant programs to assist consumers, education institutions and libraries in purchasing broadband service/equipment by working with regional economic development planning councils.

 **PROGRESS!** While Missouri still ranks low in broadband coverage, in 2021 and 2022, Missouri made more than \$100 million in investment in future broadband buildout.


**Goal:** Expand Missouri's logistics capacity for domestic and international trade

### Action Steps

- ▶ Support efforts of the Midwest Cargo Hub Commission to create an international air cargo hub at Lambert Airport in St. Louis.

 **PROGRESS!** A global livestock hub has been established at Lambert Airport, a strong step forward toward using the airport's potential to facilitate international trade. Funding to support the project was appropriated in 2022.


- ▶ Partner with corporations to develop a "Made in Missouri" campaign and help Missouri employers to network and learn more about exporting their products.

 **PROGRESS!** Led by Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe, Missouri has developed a strong campaign to promote "Made in Missouri" products.


**Goal:** Leverage Missouri's natural competitive advantage of location by investing in strong transportation infrastructure


### Action Steps

- ▶ Analyze how much additional funding is required to meet needs, and conduct polling to see what funding methods or combination of funding methods Missourians will support.


 **PROGRESS!** In 2021, the Missouri Chamber Foundation produced the study Transportation2030, a guiding force behind the \$500 million annual transportation investment increase passed by the Missouri Legislature that same year. The Missouri Chamber Foundation also provided polling

data, produced an effective advertising campaign and built a coalition of stakeholders around the plan.


 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, a \$2.8 billion investment in I-70 and an environmental study for I-44 and Highway 63 was passed by the Missouri Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Parson.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2024, a \$577 million investment in I-44 was approved by Gov. Parson.


- ▶ Focus transportation infrastructure investment priorities on the most leveraged areas for productivity and economic growth.


 **PROGRESS!** The Transportation2030 report provided this data.


- ▶ Employing the above data, develop a long-range plan for sustainable infrastructure funding.

 **PROGRESS!** Passage of the 2021 investment package is a strong element in a long-range transportation investment plan.


- ▶ Support the Missouri Department of Transportation's freight plan, and improve freight mobility and connections between roads, rail and ports.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature approved \$53 million to improve railroad crossing safety.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature approved \$91 million in port authority grants.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature approved \$3 million in freight enhancement connector projects.

- ▶ Invest in a strong grassroots campaign and media plan to build support for a sustainable transportation strategy.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber's grassroots campaign was a key element in the success of the 2021 transportation investment package.

# Uniting the Business Community



## WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALED:

The Gallup survey clearly identified policies that Missouri employers want addressed, but employers were not confident in elected officials' ability to enact change. Only 20 percent of the business leaders surveyed believe that politicians are committed to improving the state's business climate. Elected officials have championed numerous economic studies and initiatives over the years, but those plans languish when the politicians leave office. Many of the findings in the Missouri 2030 research echoed previous studies and analysis. Unfortunately, no long-term, actionable plan has been put in place to implement the changes. Missouri has seen a cycle of studies pointing out problems, without a unified vehicle to act.

Our research demonstrates that Missouri employers want to change that dynamic. According to the one-on-one CEO interviews, 87 percent believe the Missouri Chamber should serve in the leadership role to advance a unified initiative to better position our state economically.


## HOW MISSOURI 2030 CAN HELP MISSOURI BETTER UNITE:

Fragmentation has become the norm for Missouri. The divide and dissent between our political parties, urban-rural interests and metropolitan boosters all create friction as we look for statewide direction in education, infrastructure and business climate. If Missouri is going to take the actions necessary to be more competitive, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry and its business leadership must lead on these critical issues. We must look for alignment between elected officials and the policies that we believe are necessary to grow the economy.


## Goal: Unite the business community.

### Action steps:


- ▶ Create an online dashboard to display Missouri's progress in key economic indicators and hold leaders accountable for improvement.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation has created an online dashboard that tracks more than 30 key economic metrics.

- ▶ Continue to hold strategic planning sessions with the state's most influential CEOs to keep the business agenda focused.

 **PROGRESS!** Each year the Missouri Chamber Foundation holds at least one Leadership Council dinner and meets one-on-one with CEOs to discuss progress of the plan.


- ▶ Continue to build the Missouri Chamber Federation, a network of Missouri's strongest chambers of commerce, by adding more members and equipping members with resources and tools needed to engage in statewide advocacy and workforce and economic development initiatives.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber hired a dedicated employee to create the Missouri Chamber Federation, an organization of more than 200 local chambers of commerce that work together on legislative and statewide initiatives of common interest.

- ▶ Secure endorsements of Missouri 2030 from other influential economic development, workforce development and trade associations and provide materials that these entities can use to educate their constituents and advocate for those measures in the plan that align with their goals.

 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation has successfully secured endorsements and support from many additional stakeholders for specific areas of the plan, including the Missouri Realtors, the Missouri AFL-CIO, Kansas City Civic Council, the St. Louis Regional Business Council and more)

- ▶ Invest in communications and strategies to improve Missouri's business image.
- ▶ Issue frequent media releases, provide briefings and communicate economic development accomplishments to the public, investors and stakeholders.

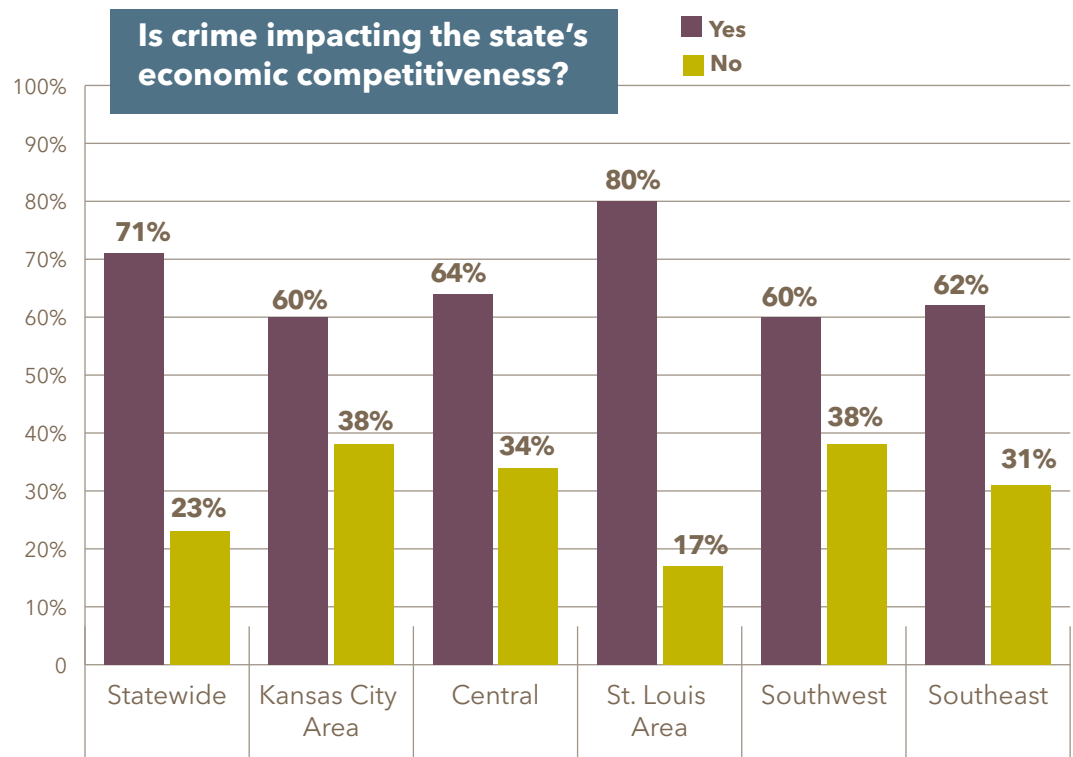
 **PROGRESS!** The Missouri Chamber Foundation has deployed an aggressive effort to keep the public and investors and stakeholders informed through one-on-one briefings, Leadership Council meetings and ongoing public relations.

# Protecting Health and Safety

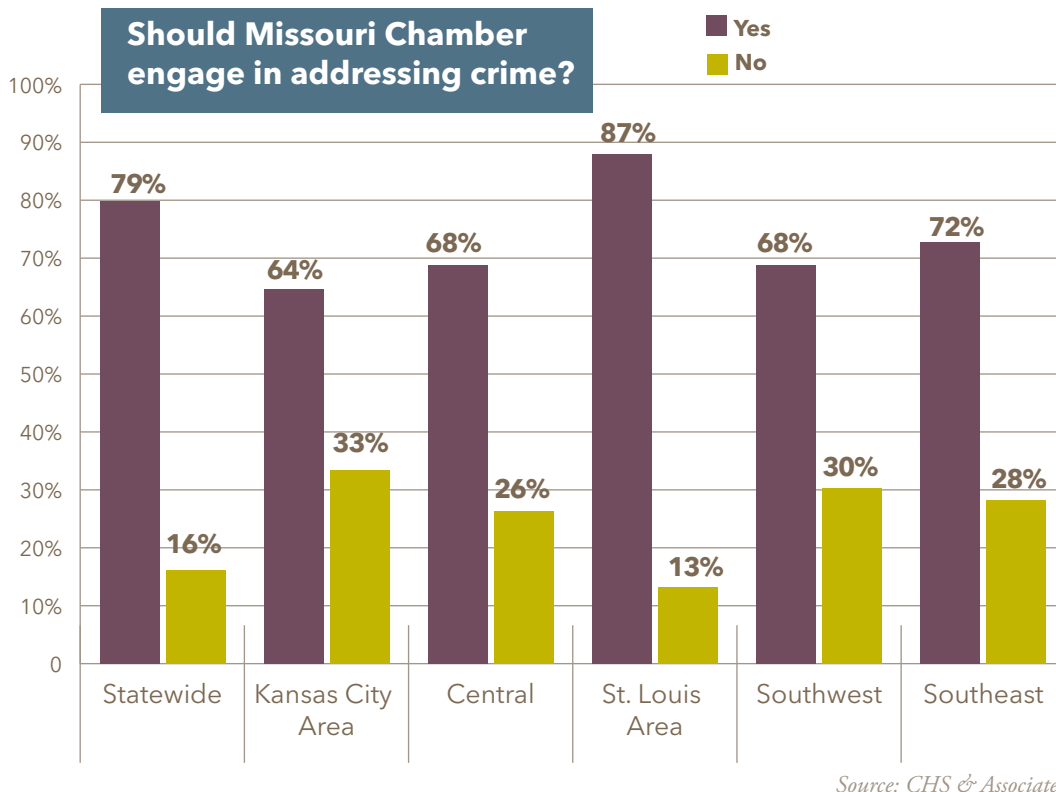
Public safety affects every Missourian. Low crime rates are consistently reported as a top factor for people choosing where to live. It influences where they shop, play and work. Safety and security contribute to citizens' mental health and well-being. Beyond the personal effects, crime can rob a town or neighborhood of its vitality and its sense of community.

Public safety is also a significant business issue. It impacts profitability, risk and access to employees and customers. In the past year, concern about public safety in Missouri has risen among the state's business leaders. The negative national attention stalls economic growth as it hinders the recruitment of talent and business investment. The persistent headlines raise doubts about the future. But most importantly, the day-to-day impacts on Missouri lives and communities are unacceptable. Employees should not be afraid to take public transportation or walk from their car to work. Repeated property crime cannot continue. Something must be done to address public safety issues in Missouri.

In a 2021 poll of Missouri CEOs, the Missouri Chamber asked if crime was affecting economic competitiveness. The poll was conducted by CHS and Associates, who reached out to more than 600 CEOs



Source: CHS & Associates



and business leaders from around the state and across industries. The results were overwhelming. The vast majority of business leaders believe crime is hurting our economy and they want to see change.

Nearly three quarters of Missouri business leaders see crime negatively impacting the state's economy (see chart at left). Concern among St. Louis business leaders hit a remarkable 80 percent.

Not only do members see crime as an issue, nearly eight of every 10 CEOs surveyed want the Missouri Chamber to engage to find solutions (see chart above). St. Louis CEOs are most urgently asking for assistance to address crime in their region.


To further analyze the problem, we conducted one-on-one interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders across the state. We spoke with leaders in local, state and federal law enforcement, as well as with legal, criminal justice and corrections experts. Stakeholders from major civic organizations participated. Leaders from the fields of health, mental health, social services and community service organizations also provided their frank input.

Regardless of whether the interviewee was a law enforcement professional or community leader, there was widespread agreement that public safety is a significant concern across Missouri, perhaps even "the state's most important issue." Individuals described crime as "terrible" and "out of control." Perceptions of violent crime varied by location, with homicide a particularly pressing issue in larger cities. Others noted that property crimes are increasingly turning violent. Stakeholders believe that public safety is a quality of life issue, affecting people looking to move to Missouri or even stay in parts of the state.

In addition to speaking with stakeholders, we took a close look at crime statistics and tactics in Missouri and nationwide to understand what is driving crime trends and how other states and regions are dealing with it. In the last decade, many states have enacted significant criminal justice reforms. Reforms encompass a wide range of topics, as evidenced by the best practices highlighted in this report. The primary theme in many of these is better use of limited state and local resources by focusing on high-risk individuals and high-crime geographic areas.

## Protecting Health and Safety

### Goal: Deploy evidence-based and hot-spot approaches to crime reduction

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri General Assembly enacted legislation to strengthen sentencing standards for repeat, violent offenders.


#### Action Steps

- ▶ Change sentencing standards to prioritize prison space for repeat offenders and those convicted of the most serious crimes.
- ▶ Enact comprehensive bail reform, prioritizing detention for repeat and violent offenders.
- ▶ Raise the felony theft dollar threshold and revise the persistent felony offender statute for nonviolent offenders.
- ▶ Expand the use of home incarceration and administrative release.
- ▶ Work with community organizations, churches and social service agencies in underserved or vulnerable areas to provide youth with alternative activities than crime.

### Goal: Increase and protect tools to support policing

#### Action Steps

- ▶ Prioritize funding to provide better data collection and analysis to improve policing.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature funded an improved data reporting initiative.

- ▶ Provide incentives and funding to secure statewide adoption and promote crime data sharing across the state.
- ▶ Review existing laws and adjust if these create roadblocks to responsible crime data sharing.

### Goal: Address substance misuse and mental health

#### Action Steps

- ▶ Research and deploy ways to dedicate funding for more robust mental health and drug rehabilitation

systems to divert some cases away from law enforcement.


- ▶ Expand resources to increase use of CITs (crisis intervention teams), a collaboration between law enforcement and mental health professionals, with a 40-hour training program for public safety officers on behavioral health and de-escalation strategies.
- ▶ For youth who are disruptive in their schools or communities, provide more mental and behavioral health interventions that include evaluation and treatment rather than detention and involvement with the criminal justice system.

### Goal: Reduce recidivism among those on probation or parole

#### Action Steps

- ▶ Collect data on recidivism rates in Missouri and develop an action plan for addressing high-risk groups.
- ▶ Analyze parole officer caseloads and focus staffing on high-risk populations.
- ▶ Identify ways to help remove barriers to successful re-entry, such as housing and employment opportunities.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature funded a pay for performance recidivism reduction program.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature funded a coding skill training program for inmates.

### Goal: Improve training and employment opportunities for offenders

#### Action Steps


- ▶ Support expansion of the Kansas City Chamber's pilot program that provides a connection and commitment by employers to provide second-chance employment.
- ▶ Enact a recently proposed expungement law for certain nonviolent charges to expand access to employment opportunities for low-level offenders.





- ▶ Provide social support services, such as the Certificate of Relief program, so lower-level offenders don't end up with housing and employment disqualifications.
- ▶ Create a state tax credit for businesses that hire former offenders.

## Goal: Increase public safety staffing

### Action Steps

- ▶ Conduct a statewide public safety compensation review and prioritize funding accordingly.
-  **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature funded a minority police officer recruiting program.
- ▶ Clarify or change the ability of state and local governments in Missouri to provide signing bonuses, referral bonuses and performance incentives for public safety officers. Currently, the state constitution appears to ban extra pay in some situations.
  - ▶ Offer a public safety officer apprenticeship at several locations in Missouri.
  - ▶ Increase investment in Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) academies and provide more scholarships for law enforcement officers to receive POST certification.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature approved an additional \$6 million to establish a law enforcement training site.

 **PROGRESS!** In 2023, the Missouri Legislature established a new law enforcement training reimbursement program to recruit and retain more peace officers.

- ▶ Consider a statewide law enforcement recruiting website similar to the new TeachMO.org site for educators. This site consolidates information on training, internships and scholarships. It is also paired with a teacher recruitment and retention grant program for which local areas can apply. Tools such as these can boost recruitment for public safety positions.

## Goal: Improve public perception of law enforcement

### Action Steps

- ▶ Prioritize state-level policies that will help to rebuild trust in law enforcement professionals and improve communication between police, communities and young people.
- ▶ Deploy an honest, comprehensive, long-term, statewide public relations campaign offering positive messages about the role of public safety professionals.
- ▶ Encourage businesses to drive home the message that public safety is important to talent attraction, employee retention and business expansion.
- ▶ Encourage public safety departments to do more community engagement, especially with youth. This could include in-school police presence and programming and working closely with community-based organizations.

## Goal: Increase prosecutorial consistency and transparency

### Action Steps

- ▶ Conduct a statewide review of prosecutors' staffing and caseloads to identify problem areas and solutions to address them.
- ▶ Conduct a statewide review of prosecutors' approaches to crime and their outcomes to identify best practices and policy.
- ▶ Pass legislation to set triggers for state intervention in areas with unacceptable high murder rates and prosecutor backlog.



**MISSOURI CHAMBER**  
FOUNDATION

428 East Capitol Ave. | P.O. Box 149  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

573-634-3511 | **[mochamber.com](http://mochamber.com)**