



Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce

Federal Legislative Principle Statement & Policy Priorities

The Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce believes that government's proper role in the economy is to act and pursue policies to support and encourage a capitalistic, free enterprise system that creates a climate in which private business can flourish and be successful. We believe that one of government's primary purposes is the protection and defense of private property rights and we believe that the Federal government's role should be limited to those powers expressly given to it by the Constitution of the United States.

We believe that a government's role should be limited in nature and should encourage entrepreneurship through a tax system that rewards rather than punishes productivity and innovation.

We favor a government that is fiscally responsible, one that abides by the same laws they levy upon others, and one that responds to the will and the voices they represent while ensuring that the rights of private property and enterprise are protected.

We acknowledge that the use of government incentives can be effective, but only endorse incentives that support American jobs. We realize that government spending can be a boost to our economy if used wisely and judiciously, but this spending should be done with a limited purpose and a well-defined benefit as indicated by the will of the people.

We support and encourage our leaders to address our complex issues with innovative and creative ideas to address our concerns, but to do so without compromising our core beliefs including rights to private property and to free enterprise.

We realize that government regulation is sometimes necessary, however, regulation should always be limited in scope to address the specific problem, and the goal of any regulation should be to ensure that there is a level playing field to ensure the maximum opportunity for success for entrepreneurs and the protection of our system of private property and free enterprise. We oppose overbearing regulation that creates burdens and obstacles to private enterprise. We oppose regulation which amounts to government efforts to create social engineering through regulation of free enterprise. We oppose burdensome regulations that amount to hidden taxes on private enterprise.

Education, Workforce Development & Job Creation

It is imperative to educate and train our workforce while keeping up with changes in technology and science. The Chamber promotes the outreach to businesses to determine the skills and training needed for their employees in keeping up with changes in technology and science. Additionally, the training must reflect the availability of employment within the area in order to retain the talent educated locally. Job creation is possible only through a strong private sector, therefore, the Chamber supports all efforts to promote free enterprise.

Energy and the Environment

The Chamber supports the development of a National Energy Policy for energy supply & demand involving both the public and private sectors. To ensure that our energy needs are met, bolster our economy, and enhance our national security, we should reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy by stepping up our domestic conservation and efficiency efforts, including nuclear and tidal, developing alternative energy sources, and increasing our own domestic production.

The Chamber will monitor water supply, ownership and quality concerns, including storm water discharges. The Chamber opposes the imposition of carbon taxes on energy production or use.

Health Care

The Chamber supports the following efforts to improve health care:

Supports reforms that will lower costs and improve overall health care quality and accessibility, without increasing taxes on small business, that promotes fair and free enterprise in a competitive marketplace.

Supports health care Information Technology by setting open standards for health care exchange that is secure and easy to adopt.

Supports incentive program for wellness, prevention and disease management.

Supports small business purchasing groups.

Labor, Employment and Immigration

The Chamber will continue to monitor proposed legislation at the Federal level affecting employers, including Employee Free Choice Act; Fair Labor Standards Act revisions; Family and Medical Leave Act revisions; RESPECT Act; Healthy Families Act; Equal Remedies Act; Immigration Reform; and other proposals to modify or expand existing immigration, employment and labor laws. The Chamber seeks to encourage measures that are cognizant of costs to business and do not place undue new restrictions or regulations on business. The Chamber seeks to preserve exemptions for small business that are currently in place with respect to many Federal laws, such as ADA and FMLA. “

The Chamber advocates the government deal with illegal immigrants and develop a reasonable timeline for qualified workers to obtain citizenship.

Small Business

Small businesses account for three-quarters of all new jobs in this country and embody the spirit of innovation, entrepreneurship and individual initiative.

The Chamber supports bringing together America’s small businesses-the engine of economic growth, the open exchange of information and ideas, thereby strengthening individual endeavors while amplifying the collective voice of business.

The Chamber supports incentives for small business through lower taxes and minimization of government regulations.

Taxes

The Chamber is committed to pro-growth tax policies that preserve America’s global competitiveness and is opposed to tax increases that reduce businesses’ ability to grow, invest and create jobs.

A successful economy depends on a tax code that rewards achievement, encourages investment and promotes growth.

The Chamber supports a fair collection of sales tax that includes online and catalog retailers.

Excessive Government Regulations

The Chamber opposes excessive government regulations. Each year federal agencies issue approximately 4,000 new regulations at an annual cost of nearly \$1.1 trillion. This amount is roughly equivalent to all U.S. individual and corporate income taxes paid annually and represents a huge hidden tax on the American public.

The federal regulatory system must be operated in an open and transparent manner and regulations should be based on sound, objective science. Furthermore, regulations should undergo rigorous technical analysis to ensure that they are cost-effective, flexible, and minimize regulatory burdens on business.

Standing Positions

- Monitor I-75 and SR-133
- Protect our economic engines: Moody AFB, education and health care facilities
- Support efforts to provide veterans good health care and benefits in a timely manner
- Support the U. S. Chamber of Commerce’s “Free Enterprise Campaign”
- Support the U. S. Chambers of Commerce’s “Let’s Rebuild America Campaign: *Rebuilding America’s Infrastructure – It Starts With Economic Recovery*”