



**THE STATE CHAMBER OF OKLAHOMA**  
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATES FOR BUSINESS

# COMMITTEES

As a member of The State Chamber of Oklahoma, we encourage you to get involved in the legislative process through input and participation in our various committees. These groups are typically issue-based and meet once per quarter. Please contact Lindsey Sparks with the Government Affairs Department at 405-235-3669 to be added to one of our committees and be notified of the next scheduled meeting.

## AEROSPACE COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Arnella Karges **Chair:** Steve Hendrickson

**Purpose:** To take a statewide leadership role in the protection and growth of the aerospace industry in Oklahoma

**Goals:**

- Protect aerospace industry-specific economic development incentives
- Promote legislation that is designed to foster the continued expansion and development of the aerospace industry

## CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES TASK FORCE

**Staff:** Gwendolyn Caldwell **Chair:** Bev Binkowski

**Purpose:** To plan and conduct The State Chamber's annual Washington, D.C. Fly-In and Congressional Reception

**Goals:**

- Provide program elements focusing on federal issues important to Oklahoma's business community
- Present the opportunity for attendees to discuss issues with congressmen, senators and staff
- Honor Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation and their staffs at a gala reception in the nation's capitol

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/TAXATION COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Gwendolyn Caldwell **Chair:** Scott Meacham

**Purpose:** Monitor and analyze tax and economic development issues and legislation as to their impact on Oklahoma businesses and recommend policy to The State Chamber Board of Directors

**Goals:**

- Support and develop legislation designed to improve Oklahoma's business climate that leads to the creation of good jobs and wealth
- Explore and develop new tax incentives for economic development in Oklahoma
- Support legislation that will improve Oklahoma's agricultural industry and boost the rural economy

## EDUCATION/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Matt Robison **Chair:** Dick Williamson

**Purpose:** To promote policy designed to more effectively provide the business community with a high quality and skilled workforce

**Goals:**

- Support an education and training pathway so all Oklahomans can have skills aligned with demand occupations
- Work to ensure that every Oklahoma child is educated with a solid foundation in the basics: reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, science, history, social studies, computing skills and the arts

## ENERGY/NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Arnella Karges **Chair:** Dick Williamson

**Purpose:** Review and analyze all legislation and proposed rules and regulations that impact Oklahoma's business community

**Goals:**

- Oppose any new state agency regulatory activities that are more stringent than comparable federal laws or regulations
- Support environmentally sound legislative and regulatory policies that also foster an economic climate in which business can grow and prosper
- Assure that the costs of running all environmental programs are fairly and equitably apportioned among all beneficiaries
- Encourage the protection and conservation of our environment through voluntary, cooperative approaches, rather than through mandatory regulatory action or litigation
- Support the use of water as a resource by cities and towns, business and industry, agriculture, oil and gas, mining and other pursuits and oppose any significant changes to Oklahoma's water laws prior to the completion of the update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan in 2011 - 2012

## HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Matt Robison **Chair:** Mike Rogers

**Purpose:** Designed to create a dialogue between businesses and the health care provider community in an effort to promote policies directed at reducing the cost of health care to Oklahoma businesses

**Goals:**

- Promote legislation designed to reduce the cost of health insurance while continuing to provide quality services
- Engage with other health-related organizations and entities to help develop strategy to address quality reform in delivering health services
- Support initiatives designed to promote interest in health-related professions
- Promote free market system-based programs designed to reduce the number of uninsured in the state, reduce the high level of cost-shifting and make health insurance more affordable

## HUMAN RESOURCES & LABOR LAW COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Mike Seney **Chair:** Michael Bowling

**Purpose:** To ensure Oklahoma employers are competing on a level playing field with other states when it comes to the laws and regulations they have to comply with, particularly in the area of employment law

**Goals:**

- To protect Oklahoma's employers from unfair, unwieldy and uninformed laws and regulations in the area of employment law
- Protect "employment-at-will"
- Ensure that the government remains out of the employment process and doesn't interfere with the employment contract between the employer and the worker

## LAWSUIT REFORM COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Mike Seney **Chair:** Mark Nichols

**Purpose:** To reduce Oklahoma businesses' vulnerability to frivolous lawsuits and remove legal threats and obstacles to legitimate business operations through legal justice and lawsuit reform

**Goal:**

- Enact appropriate statutory changes to allow Oklahoma to compete with other states in the nation on an equal basis when it comes to civil liability

## LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Gwendolyn Caldwell **Chair:** H.J. Reed

**Purpose:** Provide a venue for sharing information regarding legislation and regulatory matters and political affairs

**Goals:**

- Meet weekly on Monday mornings during session to discuss legislative activities from the previous week and what might occur during the coming week
- When called upon, review overall strategy on legislative and regulatory matters, based on recommendations from The State Chamber policy committees, staff and membership

## MANUFACTURERS' COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Mike Seney **Chair:** Chuck Mills

**Purpose:** To expand and grow the critical component of Oklahoma's economy that is manufacturing

**Goals:**

- Address the issues of identifying and recruiting trained workers
- To educate our citizens and the emerging workforce on the continuing importance of manufacturing in Oklahoma
- Promote career opportunities in the manufacturing sector
- Speak as the unified voice of Oklahoma's manufacturers, advocating business-friendly legislation and regulations at all levels of government
- Strengthen Oklahoma's manufacturing economy through pro-business legislation, business development, education, communications and networking opportunities through various programs and activities
- Reduce the regulatory and statutory burdens on manufacturers while assisting them in their efforts to comply with current laws and regulations
- Inform manufacturers of any special benefits or tax incentives dedicated to the industry
- Maintain the strong, positive relationship between manufacturers, the Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence and The State Chamber

## MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Karen Smith **Chair:** Bert Marshall

**Purpose:** To consider any and all service and support programs that add value and benefits to the membership and attract new members

**Goals:**

- Provide quality member services in order to attract and retain members

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Karen Smith **Chair:** Bryan Gonterman

**Purpose:** To help the membership and marketing staff to grow The State Chamber's membership and resource base with active and influential business leaders, trade associations, local chambers of commerce, cities, schools and other organizations

**Goal:**

- Recruit new members and raise as much money as possible each year to meet our mission

## MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Danna Fowble **Chair:** Toney Stricklin

**Purpose:** To take a statewide leadership role in protecting and growing Department of Defense interests in the state and assisting the efforts of all local entities

**Goals:**

- Convene the leadership of communities with military installations
- Advocate the consensus issues of those communities at both the state and federal levels of government
- Work with the local chambers to support state legislation that will benefit military facilities
- Educate the people of Oklahoma as to the social and economic impact of the state's military installations

## OKLAHOMA RETAIL FEDERATION COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Matt Robison **Chair:** Bob Benham

**Purpose:** Designed to protect the retail industry from over burdensome tax and regulatory policies

**Goal:**

- Strengthen the foundation of Oklahoma's retail merchants by promoting pro-jobs and pro-economic growth initiatives

## POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE - WE MEAN BUSINESS PAC

**Staff:** Gwendolyn Caldwell **Chair:** H.J. Reed

**Purpose:** To accept contributions and make expenditures to support candidates for elective state offices, primarily legislative candidates, who support the free enterprise system and a favorable business climate

**Goals:**

- Encourage and facilitate voluntary citizen participation in the governmental process
- Elect pro-business candidates and re-elect pro-business incumbents to legislative and other offices

## SMALL BUSINESS ISSUES COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Matt Robison **Chair:** Doug Schones

**Purpose:** Designed to keep the small business community engaged in policy making decisions which may help or hurt their ability to remain competitive and ensure an opportunity for growth expansion

**Goal:**

- Promote small business in Oklahoma

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Arnella Karges **Chair:** Denise Brinkmeyer

**Purpose:** To help protect and grow the technology industry in Oklahoma

**Goal:**

- Promote the continued deployment and implementation of technology solutions which provide for more efficient and effective government; protect the technology industry from adverse legislation and promote policies that are designed to foster the continued expansion and development of the technology industry

## TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Gwendolyn Caldwell **Chair:** Jeff Allen

**Purpose:** Monitor and analyze all legislation and proposed regulations that impact Oklahoma's transportation system and make certain that the state's transportation system infrastructure is capable of moving people and products efficiently and effectively

**Goals:**

- Oppose any attempts to delay or unravel the transportation funding gains made the past several years
- Educate Oklahoma citizens of the need for adequate funding to reduce the \$12 billion backlog of highway and bridge maintenance and construction needs and on how the entire transportation structure benefits commerce
- Support federal and state legislative and regulatory policies that take advantage of Oklahoma's position as one of only 11 high-speed rail corridors in America
- Support an investment in Oklahoma's general aviation system to serve the needs of business, industry and commerce
- Examine the possibility of intermodal transportation centers in Oklahoma
- Make certain that all available federal dollars are matched with the necessary state dollars
- Support dredging of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System to a minimum 12-foot channel depth and encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to host an "Inland Waterways Summit" to help develop a strategic plan for our inland waterways

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Mike Seney **Chair:** Becky Payton

**Purpose:** To build a strong, impartial workers' compensation system that protects the truly injured worker while ensuring the lowest possible cost to the employer

**Goal:**

- Revamping Oklahoma's workers' compensation system needs to be accomplished