



2009 Forward Metro St. Louis Regional Agenda

Mission Statement:

Forward Metro St. Louis - a coalition of the Regional Chamber & Growth Association, Civic Progress, Regional Business Council, Partners for Progress and Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois - advances a unified public policy agenda to develop and sustain a world-class economy for the bi-state St. Louis metropolitan region.

Statement of Principles for 2009 Legislative Sessions:

We must be realistic in addressing the financial challenges facing the States of Illinois and Missouri this year, and assist elected officials in exercising fiscal discipline with limited resources, while continuing to make strategic investments to stabilize and grow the economy. It is imperative that both states strengthen their job creation and retention efforts and remain committed to proven economic development incentive programs.

Transportation and Infrastructure:

- Ensure timely completion of the New Mississippi River Bridge and related highway improvements.
- Actively support the work of the Missouri Transportation Alliance, a statewide business-led effort designed to educate citizens on the importance of multi-modal infrastructure and identify the most critical transportation needs.
- Urge immediate passage of the Illinois Capital Bill.

Business Growth Incentives:

- Support efforts to review and reform state tax credit programs where appropriate, and strongly advocate for continuation or expansion of proven programs which directly grow the economy.
- Implement the “Grow Me State” entrepreneurial initiative to help close Missouri’s capital formation gap relative to other states.
- End the diversion of Missouri Life Sciences Research Trust Fund resources to other purposes.

Education:

- Ensure stable and successful governance of the St. Louis Public Schools.
- Support increased funding for K-12 and higher education programs, within available resources, which contribute to workforce development and economic growth.

Health Care:

- Support appropriate state funding to maximize the use of available federal Medicaid funds and reduce the number of uninsured.
- Ensure that healthcare policy initiatives are structured such that costs are not disproportionately shifted to the business sector.

Federal Issues:

- Position the bi-state St. Louis region to participate fully in federal stimulus programs related to economic development, job creation and infrastructure.
- Support plans to optimize active public use of the Arch Grounds and St. Louis riverfront.
- Support development of high speed rail service between Chicago and St. Louis.