

2024 Minnesota Chamber Federation Priorities

Costs Matter

While states across the country are permanently cutting taxes, reducing regulatory burdens and addressing affordability for businesses, Minnesota is becoming a cost outlier with the enactment of numerous anti-employer policies that are driving up costs. The 2023 Legislative Session brought costly and complicated mandates, tax increases and more regulations. Unsustainable state spending increases of more than 35% have now put Minnesota at risk for a budget deficit putting even greater strain on the private sector and the state economy. Costs matter – for employers and their employees. We must hold the line on additional tax and fee increases on businesses and prevent new, onerous proposals making Minnesota a competitive outlier such as new antitrust regulations undermining free market competition and innovation. Policymakers should focus in this non-budget session on reducing regulations creating barriers to private sector growth including reforms in permitting, housing and childcare.

Environmental permitting reform

Businesses seek expansions outside of Minnesota due to the state's arduous permitting process, and those that do invest here are often faced with greater uncertainty and lengthier timelines than what may be experienced in other states. Site selectors have pegged Minnesota as unfriendly on the criteria of environmental permitting, taking it off the list for potential investment.

The Minnesota Chamber Foundation, the nonpartisan research arm of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, is conducting an in-depth, objective analysis of Minnesota's environmental permitting system and will be releasing recommendations for reform.

The Federation will proactively advocate for reforms to Minnesota's permitting process. Minnesota's environmental permitting process can both protect the state's cherished natural resources and produce timely and reliable outcomes for businesses; achieving this goal is one important step to help Minnesota compete in the 21st century economy.

Workplace mandates: Educate, modify and defend

Several onerous workplace mandates passed last session. The sick and safe time requirement becomes effective January 1, 2024. The Paid Family and Medical Leave Act goes into effect January 2026. Many, many businesses across the state are unaware of these mandates.

The Federation plays an important role in educating their members on the mandates and compliance.

In addition, we will look to Federation partners to help mitigate the impacts of workplace mandates through the rulemaking process, especially the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act.

Finally, we will defend against further workplace mandates that harm the employer/employee relationship and make it more difficult, and expensive, to operate a business in Minnesota.

Provide local and regional leadership for Minnesota Matters

Minnesota Matters will work to inform voters about changes in Minnesota election laws that allow for early and absentee voting; make voters aware of key election dates; encourage employers and employees to attend their local precinct caucuses; and engage in what promises to be an important election in our state. This is non-partisan, non-political effort and Federation partners can assist in elevating the effort statewide.