



2019 Legislative Priorities

The Jefferson County Business Lobby advocates as the unified voice of 3,000 Jefferson County businesses for public policies that strengthen our business climate.

JCBL is a partnership comprised of the Arvada, Evergreen, Golden, West, Westminster and Wheat Ridge Chambers of Commerce, the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation and the Applewood and Wheat Ridge Business Associations.

The JCBL takes positions and lobbies on bills of major impact to JeffCo businesses. You can find our complete list of Legislative Principles on the following pages. But for the 2019 session of the Colorado General Assembly, the JCBL will focus our attention and resources advocating for the following critical needs of JeffCo businesses.

Increased Transportation Funding

Despite a \$9 billion backlog of road projects statewide, voters in 2018 soundly defeated two ballot questions seeking more funding for roads. With the issue back in the hands of the Colorado legislature, the JCBL will continue to encourage the legislature to prioritize transportation needs in the existing budget in addition to finding new sources of revenue.

Changes to the Gallagher Amendment

Approved by the voters in 1982, the “Gallagher Amendment” to the Colorado Constitution has resulted in some of the nation’s most punitive Business Personal Property Taxes. A legislative summer interim committee recommended a number of proposed changes that the JCBL is reviewing.

Sales Tax Simplification

The JCBL has been supporting an incremental and bipartisan approach to addressing Colorado’s complex and burdensome state and local sales tax collection system. A recent emergency rule proposed by the Colorado Department of Revenue to change sourcing rules for sales taxes has made this already difficult issue even more urgent.

Mitigating the Impact of Employer Mandates

The JCBL anticipates seeing more mandates and liability imposed on employers in 2019. In situations in which defeating new mandates will not be possible, we will work to ensure businesses can comply with them with minimal cost and disruption.

Please follow the JCBL’s legislative activity at jeffcobusinesslobby.org!

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JCBL 2019 Legislative Principles

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

The JCBL will advocate for:

1. Short, medium and long-term funding solutions for multi-modal transportation and infrastructure improvements to reduce congestion and ensure proper maintenance.
2. Funding transportation and infrastructure first through existing General Fund revenues, as do most other states.
3. Identifying new sources of transportation and infrastructure funding, including but not limited to:
 - a. Tax increment financing
 - b. Tolling
 - c. Regional transportation funding mechanisms
 - d. A reasonable increase in the state sales or gas tax for transportation
 - e. Bonding against future revenue to jump start transportation improvements earlier.
4. Funding for regional multi-modal transportation projects in or near Jefferson County to ease congestion and to maintain existing infrastructure.

LOWERING REGULATORY BURDENS AND COSTS

The JCBL will advocate for:

1. Regulatory reform to reduce unnecessary, redundant, inefficient or costly regulatory burdens and create a more predictable business climate.
2. Passage of long-sought after legislation enabling small businesses to cure minor violations of regulations, such as paperwork errors, in lieu of facing a monetary fine and;
3. Educational outreach by regulators, rather than an over-reliance on penalties.
4. A more robust cost-benefit approach to all new regulations and opposition to unreasonable or costly new regulatory mandates.

5. Eliminating unfunded state and federal mandates on local jurisdictions.

FOSTERING A STRONG, COMPETITIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

The JCBL will advocate for:

1. Creating new, and defending existing, tax incentives for economic development and urban renewal in Jefferson County, including the jobs tax credit, tax increment financing and other important tools.
2. A balanced litigation environment where business owners don't live under continual threat of meritless lawsuits from employees or plaintiffs looking to force a quick settlement.
3. Legislation that ensures a competitive, viable, affordable and accessible health care system and opposition to mandates or other legislation that creates additional expense and burden on employers and employees who pay for that system.
4. Pro-energy development policies for both traditional and non-traditional resources.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENTED EMPLOYEES

The JCBL will advocate for:

1. Continued efforts by the legislature to address Colorado's housing affordability crisis.
 - a. Reform of Colorado's construction litigation laws, as they encourage abusive lawsuits against developers and contractors, resulting in the near elimination of condo construction and an attainable housing shortage for new and existing employees. While some progress was made in curbing lawsuits against multi-family for-sale projects, the problem has not been solved.
 - b. Encouraging construction of new single-family homes, the inventory of which is historically low, despite a booming economy and huge in-migration, resulting in increased housing costs. Many of the reasons for this lack of new construction are policy based.
 - c. Opposing local and state efforts to artificially limit growth, which will only exacerbate the problem.
2. Addressing the skilled labor shortage in Jefferson County through more – and more effective – training and retraining programs through K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.
3. Increasing and enhancing incentives for talent retention and experiential training in key areas, including IT, STEM and the skilled trades.
4. Strong state funding for public education and higher education necessary to attract and retain top talent.

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