



NORTHEAST WISCONSIN CHAMBERS COALITION

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2012 Legislative Agenda

The 54 Chambers of Commerce throughout Northeast Wisconsin representing over 18,000 businesses and employing over 450,000 Wisconsin taxpayers, would like to take this opportunity to thank the many legislators representing Northeast Wisconsin for their significant efforts in controlling spending and avoiding new taxes during the next budget session. Many of the goals achieved this past year have been long standing priorities of the Coalition. There is no doubt that meaningful progress has been made on a number of the Coalitions top concerns, however, there is still work to be done.

Below you will find a list of the coalition's key initiatives for 2012.

Employee Relations

- Bring ALL public sector employees' benefits in line with the private sector.

Health Care: Creating a Long Term, Economically Responsible Plan

- Reform Badger Care to provide recipients with medical savings accounts and require participation in health evaluations and wellness programs
- Support consumer driven health plans and the transparency of cost and quality data that is needed to support wise consumer choices.
- Support incentives for employers that provide employee wellness programs.
- Work to ensure that the State Health Insurance exchanges described in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act do not compromise or destroy the health care alliances already in place around the country, or the ability of individuals and businesses to create those alliances outside the state exchange.

Taxation and Spending: Truth and Fairness

- Repeal all increases on capital gains taxes passed in 2009.
- Repeal the 1% increase in personal income tax for incomes over \$250,000 for individuals and \$300,000 per couple.
- Continue to press for a state budget that is balanced using generally accepted accounting principles.
- Allow privatization of routine services and functions when cost-effective.
- Oppose business tax increases including: expansion or increase of sales, personal or corporate income tax.

Governance: Truth and Fairness

- Amend the State Constitution regarding recall elections, specifically identifying what action or inaction constitutes sufficient grounds to recall an elected official.

Air, Water Quality and Energy

- Refrain from enacting new state standards on air quality while supporting efforts to keep NEW counties in compliance with air standards, without further interference from Washington.
- Refrain from any unilateral or premature action on global warming.
- Support the work by the League of Municipalities in developing changes to the implementation schedule for NR 151. This will allow for increased flexibility in meeting the forty percent standard and will not be as severe of a financial burden to the taxpayers.
- Prohibit the Department of Natural Resources from enacting or enforcing an air quality standard, performance standard or other emission limitation that is more stringent in substance or form than what is required under the Clean Air Act.
- Prohibit the Department of Natural Resources from implementing a water quality criteria for phosphorus or nitrogen until all states located in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 and EPA Region 7 have enacted similar water quality criteria for each nutrient, and have enacted a similar implementation mechanism to establish water quality based effluent limits for point source dischargers.

Transportation:

- Work with state and federal government to ensure that the semi-trailer weight limit exemptions, currently in place on U.S. Highway 41, remain in place following its conversion to interstate status.
- Amend Wisconsin Constitution to prohibit any further transfers or lapses from the segregated transportation fund.
- Work to have Transportation Fund transfers over the last two biennia replaced in next budget.
- Work to achieve Interstate Status for U. S. Highway 41.
- Work to secure Northeast Wisconsin's fair share of federal infrastructure funding.
- Investigate ways to adequately fund Wisconsin transportation infrastructure needs beyond gas tax and registration fees, i.e.; public-private partnerships, tolling, etc.

Economic Development:

- Continue strong financial support for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.
- Encourage jobs and economic development via a state-leveraged capital program.
- Create vehicles to incentivize entrepreneurship and venture capital investing.
- Enhance the regulatory streamlining process.

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