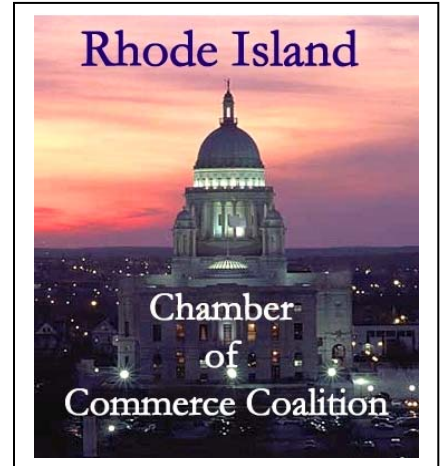


*Central Rhode Island, Cranston,
East Bay, East Greenwich, East Providence Area,
Greater Westerly-Pawcatuck, Newport County,
North Central, Northern Rhode Island, North Kingstown,
& Southern Rhode Island
Chambers of Commerce*

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2012 Legislative Agenda

- **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports responsible budget and taxation policy crafted to:**
 - **Provide short term and long term fiscal responsibility and sustainability**
 - **Allow Rhode Island businesses to remain competitive**
 - **Preserve necessary services for the businesses and citizens of Rhode Island**

The Chambers oppose proposals to increase taxes or fees, institute new taxes or fees and/or expand the application of taxes where currently exempt.

The Chambers believe that increasing taxes or creating new taxes is the wrong solution to state and local fiscal problems. The Chambers believe that responsibly controlling state and local spending is a better solution.

- **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports responsible changes to state and local employees retirement and benefit system laws that result in substantial savings for taxpayers.**
- **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports responsible legislative, regulatory, administrative and other measures designed to create positive economic development opportunities for Rhode Island.**
- **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports measures designed to provide for a competent, well-trained workforce while guaranteeing employer's rights to conduct business in a manner consistent with free market principles.**

The Chambers support workforce-training initiatives and oppose use of employer contributed workforce development dollars to non-workforce training uses.

The Chambers support fair and equitable measures to bring the state's unemployment insurance trust fund to solvency.

The Chambers oppose mandatory increases in minimum wage tied to indexes.

The Chambers oppose efforts to reduce the threshold dollar amount necessary for automatic implementation of Project Labor Agreements.

The Chambers oppose proposals that directly conflict with these goals.

➤ **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports equitable, consistent and reasonable government regulation and regulatory advocacy.**

The Chambers oppose overly burdensome and unnecessary regulation.

The Chambers support responsibly streamlining regulations and the regulatory and permitting process where appropriate.

The Chambers oppose amending class action laws for currently regulated businesses.

The Chambers oppose creating duplicate oversight for businesses currently subject to regulatory authority.

➤ **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports legislative and regulatory reforms ensuring Rhode Island businesses and employees have access to affordable, quality health care.**

The Chambers support reasonable and effective tort reform.

The Chambers oppose further efforts mandating minimum employer contributions to health insurance coverage for employees, health insurance coverage options, provider choice or benefits.

The Chambers support creation of a health insurance mandate review commission and health insurance exchange creation commission.

➤ **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports responsibly investing in and supporting all levels of public education.**

The Chambers support efforts to provide a high-caliber, affordable system that prepares students for entrance into the workforce.

The Chambers will support remedies designed to allow for more effective use of public education dollars through efforts such as step process revisions, removing health insurance from the scope of school department collective bargaining agreements and allowing the state to universally provide for districts, and suspending the Caruolo Act in fiscal years in which municipalities receive less financial support from the state than in the prior fiscal year.

- **The Chamber of Commerce Coalition supports responsible measures to protect the environment of the State of Rhode Island.**

The Chamber of Commerce Coalition is comprised of 10 Chambers of Commerce, representing 7,000 member businesses. It is the largest business advocacy group in Rhode Island.