



Legislative Watch List Fiscal Year 2017

The North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce will aggressively support issues and programs to improve the business climate and oppose legislation that negatively impacts business in North Central Massachusetts, becoming sufficiently involved in the political process to really make the voice of the business community heard. We are committed to providing resources to represent North Central Massachusetts at all levels of government for issues of importance to economic and business development.

Our priorities revolve around supporting economic advancement in North Central Massachusetts and advocating for a business friendly environment. Our advocacy efforts are designed to fulfill five core priority areas: **economic competitiveness**; **small business**; **manufacturing**; **transportation**; and **education**.

- Support efforts to advance high speed internet and broadband in underserved areas of North Central Massachusetts;
- Identify and advocate for lower cost and diversified energy sources that reduce the high energy costs that businesses face;
- Advocate for increased investments in regional economic development, micro-lending and technical assistance funding at the state and federal levels; promote regionalization among cities and towns
- Encourage regulatory reform and streamlined permitting across all communities;
- Encourage local communities to support single property tax rates and stand firm against efforts to increase tax rates;
- Promote public promotion and investments in tourism at the state and local level to leverage greater support for tourism marketing;
- Support efforts that control or reduce the amount of expenses businesses incur related to health care costs, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation insurance and other mandated employee benefits;
- Support legislation that removes the inventory tax for manufacturers;
- Lead efforts to garner support and financing for manufacturing career readiness and government sponsored programs that help remove the stigma associated with careers in manufacturing;
- Advocate for better public transportation sources including access and expansion to the commuter rail, infrastructure improvements to Route 2, regional transportation, and other projects and advancements that make North Central Massachusetts more accessible;
- Advocate for greater investments in education and workforce development that provide resources for students to be successful after graduation and fill workforce competitiveness gaps;
- Explore and support education alternatives that provide high-quality education and resources to students;