

2021 - 2022 Pro-Business Federal Policy Agenda

Business Community Advocacy Council Approved
GRCA Board Approved

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance will lead, educate, engage, inform and advocate to advance a federal policy agenda that serves as the voice for business. Our members want to operate in a business environment that allows them to recover, grow, and thrive. GRCA's policy priorities reach beyond the legislative and regulatory agenda to encompass administrative policies that have implications on businesses, our community and economy. We urge Congress and the Administration to pursue a public policy agenda that will reinforce confidence among employers, provide resources necessary to develop a talented workforce and enable economic vibrancy for our Greater Reading Region – Berks County. Our member driven policy agenda is outlined below.

MODERN, SAFE, EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure our infrastructure is adequately funded to enable construction and maintenance of our aging transportation and utility systems along with other infrastructure. Modern, safe, reliable, and efficient Transportation Infrastructure Systems are a core function of government. Transportation systems and utility infrastructure is vital to attract and retain quality businesses to grow the economy, increase regional and PA competitiveness, and retain/create jobs. This includes Transportation, Transit/Mobility, Energy, Broadband and Water/Wastewater. Our members support continued regulatory reform due to current impediments on improvements and skyrocketing costs.

DRIVING ECONOMIC RECOVERY + GROWTH

Support the funding of economic development programs that have positive social and economic impact in Berks County as we work through the COVID-19 virus and recovery. Congress needs to establish limited liability protection from unnecessary COVID-19 litigation to protect businesses that operate in good faith.

RETAINING A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS TAX STRUCTURE/ RESPONSIBLE BUDGET + GOVERNMENT

SPENDING The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) needs to be preserved because it reduced the effective tax rate across all income brackets and continues to facilitate business investment in capital and employees. Comprehensive reforms of and reductions in specific business taxes are still necessary to help stimulate economic development in recovery. We encourage Congress and the Administration to work collaboratively towards passing annual budgets and away from continuing resolutions while understanding that all opportunities for cost-savings and efficient spending should be exhausted before new or higher taxes are considered to address deficit spending, entitlement programs, or new initiatives.

PROVIDING + ATTRACTING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

Economic viability and long-term prosperity for Greater Reading – Berks County depends upon a well-educated and skilled workforce, paired with a healthy talent pipeline that addresses the growing skills gap identified by our companies.

BALANCED LABOR + EMPLOYMENT LAWS

Changes to labor relations and employment policies are necessary to facilitate a fair work environment and address abuse. Our members support reforms to the unemployment compensation, workers' compensation and welfare systems that focuses on returning injured employees to full health and function. Employers oppose excessive mandates that unnecessarily increase the cost of doing business.

AFFORDABLE + ACCESSIBLE BENEFITS

Berks County employers want to be able to offer workers quality, affordable health care options. We will continue to advocate for reforms to the health care, insurance and medical liability that will improve the system, providing flexibility to encourage (rather than mandate) and promote competition.