

# Strong Economy CHECKLIST

## ○ Avoid Tax Increases.

During budget debate, seek to retain existing small business tax provisions and to oppose significant tax or fee increases. The fragility of many Ohio businesses resulting from COVID-19 would make any increases especially harmful and destabilizing. Ohio should not risk this outcome.

## ○ Broadband Connectivity.

Enact legislation expanding market-based, affordable broadband access in both rural and urban Ohio to enhance education and economic development. Leverage Ohio's strong private sector providers to ensure state-of-the-art connectivity. Until that connectivity is in place, rural and some urban populations are at a severe disadvantage economically and educationally to the rest of the state.

## ○ Job Development.

Economic development and accompanying capital formation programs that allow entrepreneurs with good ideas to form and grow businesses are important to Ohio and Ohioans. Businesses and elected policymakers should work together to ensure that Ohio has a strong portfolio of development and capital programs, because these will attract to Ohio technical jobs and other jobs of the future. JobsOhio and the Third Frontier bond program are two successful examples.

## ○ Keep Education Standards High.

Any attempt to roll back school academic and accountability standards must be opposed. Consideration should also be given to supplemental instruction to help students affected by the pandemic return to grade level performance.

## ○ Keep Courts Fair.

Preserve Ohio's current strong civil justice environment and efforts of the Ohio Alliance for Civil Justice. Ohio law and the judges who interpret it control this important aspect of Ohio's economic strength. Legislatively, an immediate concern is an extension of legislation passed last year to protect businesses and employers trying to get back to work in the wake of the pandemic from frivolous COVID-19 lawsuits.

## ○ Develop Our Workforce.

Sustain and grow workforce readiness programs such as TechCred, industry credentialing, and streamlining workforce development programs. A strong economy demands a qualified workforce. Ohio businesses have jobs for those with necessary training.

## ○ Fix Unemployment Compensation.

Renew efforts to restore stable financing and make needed policy reforms for Ohio's unemployment compensation system. The system is currently \$1.4 billion in debt, and we applaud the DeWine Administration for their proposal to use one-time federal stimulus money to pay off the loan. Many reforms in the system are necessary, but minimally a small increase in the taxable wage base accompanied by a freeze in maximum weekly benefits are moderate reforms that can serve as a first step.

## ○ Assure Competitive Energy.

Availability of affordable and reliable energy is critical to Ohio's competitiveness. Market-based economic models that fairly balance the needs of customers and energy providers will serve Ohio best in the long run.

## ○ Curtail Patchwork Local Laws.

Enact legislation that harnesses the power of the Ohio Constitution to hinder or dissuade local governments from passing ordinances which interfere with commercial activities that are otherwise legal. Businesses operating across municipal boundaries selling comparable products or services should not have to bear unproductive costs or separate rules and requirements for each municipality. On the question of work rules, benefits and pay, the Ohio Constitution gives exclusive jurisdiction to the General Assembly, which must be observed.

## ○ Keep H2Ohio Flowing.

Support continuation of the H2Ohio Program to maximize the public/private partnership to drive water quality solutions in Ohio.

## ○ Prevent Ballot Abuse.

Ballot abuse prevention is overdue in Ohio to serve as a barrier to out-of-state interests, or those seeking personal profit, from using Ohio's initiative and referendum for selfish purposes. Consideration should be given to making it more difficult to take advantage of our Constitution in this way.

# BUSINESS

## Is Everybody's Business

Our Ohio economy is the sum of all transactions for goods and services in the state. When it is strong and vibrant, Ohioans share in the quality of life that comes with general prosperity.

It's our economy that provides money for wages, healthcare, pensions, tax revenues, tuitions, government assistance, education, highways, parks, the arts, and all we hold dear in Ohio. It is a wealth-producing machine, and we all have a stake in keeping it strong.

Like all machines, our economy requires periodic maintenance and tune-up. **The six major trade associations listed on the cover agree that the policies included here are necessary to maintain our economic machinery at maximum performance and efficiency.**

# TENETS

## of Good Legislation

**CIVIL JUSTICE.** Ohio's civil justice system should be fair, dependable, and reasonable. It should discourage class action and frivolous lawsuits. Judges should be elected or appointed based on their commitment to rule on the law as written by the General Assembly.

**REGULATION.** Necessary regulations should be fair, and designed for simple and inexpensive compliance. Regulations should be regularly re-examined and kept up to date, and eliminated when outmoded.

**ENERGY.** Energy policy in Ohio must provide an adequate supply of energy that is clean, safe, and affordable. It should welcome innovation and development of new sources if they are competitively viable.

**TAXATION.** Taxes should be set at the lowest rate possible over the broadest base possible. Taxes should be fair, treating similar taxpayers similarly. Taxes should not create winners and losers in the private sector marketplace.

# BUSINESS

## Legislative Recommendations



The six major Ohio business trade associations support the recommendations listed here. All play a role in maintaining a strong Ohio economy.