







BLUEPRINT FOR OHIO'S ECONOMIC FUTURE SETS STAGE FOR CONTINUED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Justin Barnes, Executive Director, Ohio Chamber of Commerce Research Foundation

Over a year ago, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Chamber Research Foundation set out to determine ways to improve Ohio's economic competitiveness compared to our neighboring and peer states across the country. After a series of economic development victories announced by Governor DeWine's administration, we aimed to highlight ways we can improve upon our progress to keep the momentum going and ensure sustained growth for future generations of Ohioans.

Levers	Indicators	Levers	Indicators
Education & Workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workforce Participation/ Labor Supply/ Barriers• K-12 Education• Higher Education	Sense of Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Health• Affordability & Housing• Economic Opportunity• Recreational Amenities
Taxes and Costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tax Burden• Cost Of Doing Business• Fiscal Stability	Innovation & Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Venture Capital• Start-ups And Entrepreneurship• Modernization & Data Privacy• Research And Development• Patents
Business Friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory Landscape• Occupational Licensing• Legal Climate• Economy• GDP Growth	Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy/Utilities• Internet Accessibility• Roads and Bridges• Transportation

In partnership with Accenture, the Research Foundation deconstructed a series of rankings and metrics—based on both public and private data—that examined Ohio's economic climate to analyze where the state could see the biggest gains in productivity, business growth, and overall economic expansion. We also conducted in-person workshops and a series of interviews to assess the real-world impacts of Ohio's current policy environment. The result of that body of work was published in late October as the Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Future.

The Blueprint highlights six key areas, or “levers” where Ohio's rankings stand to gain relative to other states: Workforce & Education, Sense of Place, Taxes & Costs, Innovation & Collaboration, Business Friendliness, and Infrastructure. Within each of these levers, a deeper dive reveals the strategic indicators that are associated with those rankings and how Ohio measures against our competition.

Throughout our report, there are critical issues that we emphasize as the necessary policy discussions that can kickstart a decade of leadership, with the goal of making Ohio the best place in the nation to own or operate a business. For example, we know that we will need to place a heavy emphasis in the coming years on workforce development and talent attraction. Ohio has a wealth of career opportunities in multiple sectors, and it will be essential for policymakers to match the skills needed to fill those jobs with the development pipeline of K-12 education, higher education, and talent attraction efforts. We are grateful for the leadership of the DeWine Administration in this area, through the creation of programs such as TechCred and OhioBuilds, which will emphasize workforce development and upskilling for industries in search of a broader pool of workforce talent. We want to see these efforts continued and built upon in several ways that will reduce barriers to entry for those who are seeking to join or re-join the workforce, and continue to make Ohio a destination for economic opportunity.

Each lever has a series of recommendations that we intend to work on in the coming months and years to bolster Ohio's case as the most competitive state in the nation for businesses. Some of these recommendations will result in legislative policy, while others will require a collaboration with public and private sector partners across the state. We intend to follow the Blueprint with additional research efforts where necessary, fulfilling the mission of the Research Foundation to provide non-partisan, educational resources on public policy issues that impact Ohio's economy, job creation, and long-term competitiveness. We also intend to create a dashboard where you can track our efforts in each category, and visualize our progress moving forward.

With your support, we will improve our business climate and grow our economy for the benefit of all Ohioans. We look forward to working with you to improve Ohio's economic competitiveness. Should you have any questions about the report, or are interested in helping us deliver these important messages to policymakers in your area, please contact me directly at jbarnes@ohiochamber.com.