

2020 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



This Agenda addresses a broad range of topics affecting Bixby: education, transportation, City budget, and more.

EDUCATION

/// Appropriate incrementally additional funds to the formula with no additional requirements to meet needs now and in the future for education at all levels (K12, higher education, and career tech) to prepare and grow an educated and skilled workforce to meet the demands of a changing economy and address workforce shortages. With Oklahoma student growth projected to grow by 5% in the next decade, increased funding distributed with the ability for local allocation will promote educational outcomes.

/// Oppose passage of bills that would allow tax credits to specifically fund private education providers.

STATE FUNDING

/// Support legislation that removes barriers to allow municipalities to reduce costs, operate efficiently, and diversify sources of revenue available to municipalities for operating revenue. Key initiatives include diversifying revenue for funding public safety agencies, streets, and other infrastructure improvements; and preserving and strengthening cities' authority to promote economic development activities within their borders. *2020 OneVoice Regional Legislative Agenda item

/// Support efforts to reduce amount of dedicated funds in order to increase pool of appropriated funds available to the legislature.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

/// Support tax credits, exemptions and incentives that provide an economic return to the state of Oklahoma, maintain competitiveness in business attraction and retention, and increase capital investment. Several programs proposed for review by the Oklahoma Incentive Evaluation Commission are critical to the state's competitiveness and should be protected, including the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, all Quality Jobs programs, Small Business Incubator Tenant Credit and the Oklahoma Seed Capital Fund. *Adapted from 2020 OneVoice Regional Legislative Agenda

/// Support promotion and improvement in marketing of economic development incentives by adjusting marketing plans and budgets to increase employer education on incentive programs.

TRANSPORTATION

/// Support high-priority Bixby area projects in the Oklahoma Department of Transportation 8-year plan for 2024 completion that includes expanding Highway 64 from 161st to Mingo, and the addition to the 8-year plan of expanding Highway 64 from 111th to 151st to six lanes, with additional lanes for the Arkansas River bridge. Support completion year of 2021 for US-64 and US-169 interchange improvement.

/// Support completion of Tulsa County's Harvard widening project between 151st & 141st.

/// Support creation of an additional South County Arkansas River vehicle crossing.

HEALTH COVERAGE

/// Broaden and protect health care coverage by capturing all available state and federal funds for the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. *2020 OneVoice Regional Task Force Item

WORKFORCE

/// Support efficiencies within the Oklahoma Administrative Workers' Compensation Act that create cost-effective administrative policies that will continue to lower premiums, decrease case timelines, and provide appropriate benefits to injured workers that are equal to regional averages.

/// Increase state funding for District Attorneys, provide transparency of their budgets, and cap court fees to reduce the creation of an unethical burden to defendants when they try and enter the workforce.

/// Prioritize funding for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to restore recently-cut services and allow for new innovations in prevention, treatment and services. Such investments will increase business' access to healthy workers, boost employee productivity, improve student and youth outcomes, save money in the criminal justice system and enable more Oklahomans to contribute meaningfully to the economy. Support any legislation that would aid in increased mental health services in public schools.

Presented by:



2020 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



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SOCIAL SECURITY

/// Support efforts to form bipartisan group to analyze Social Security adjustments and future viability.

FINANCIAL AID

/// Support the reform of federal financial aid eligibility to improve access to higher education for all Americans. This should include:

- Increasing funding for the Pell Grant program and oppose attempts to cap per-student grants
- Improve FAFSA outreach and education
- Allow short-term, industry-driven training programs to qualify for federal financial aid
- Expand student loan forgiveness programs

/// Simplify and streamline the financial aid application process.

IMMIGRATION

/// Support comprehensive immigration reform that enables the U.S. to attract the best and brightest talent from around the world. Steps should be taken to secure borders and establish reasonable, affordable and efficient visa policies that empower American businesses to hire essential workers and remove barriers for top talent to work in the U.S. Immediate steps should be taken to address workforce shortages in specialty and technology occupations, including increasing the cap on H-1B and H-2B visas; and improving H-1B fairness for small and medium employers by lowering application fees, eliminating the lottery-selection process in favor of a needs-based system. Oppose further state legislation related to immigration reform.

HEALTHCARE

/// Support health care reforms at the state and federal level which will enable small businesses to keep health insurance premium costs down and increase the number of insured employees.

/// Minimize the regulatory burden on small and medium employers under the Affordable Care Act and support efforts to reduce these employers' cost of providing health care. This should include eliminating 1094 and 1095 reporting requirements by employers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

/// Strongly support (or oppose efforts to cut) targeted economic development funding for programs that have proven to be effective and beneficial to the Tulsa Region. These include the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants for infrastructure and planning and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), a program under the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology.

INFRASTRUCTURE

/// Support a comprehensive federal infrastructure funding package, and fully fund authorized federal transportation programs. The economic success of our region and country relies upon the strength of our transportation infrastructure.

Tulsa's Levee System

Continue to support addressing the critical infrastructure needs with Tulsa's aging levee system, the need of which was dramatically evidenced by extended Spring 2019 releases of water from Keystone Dam and the resulting downstream flooding. Complete the feasibility study currently underway by the Corps of Engineers in the most expeditious manner and secure appropriations for needed improvements. The Corps of Engineers has designated the Tulsa Levees as one of the five percent highest-risk levee systems in the country. Federal legislation has authorized the Corps to develop a plan for addressing the structural deficiencies but securing funding should remain a top priority. If one levee fails, it would be catastrophic for homeowners, nationally strategic oil refineries, multiple industries currently protected by the system, and have devastating environmental impacts for our region. *2020 OneVoice Regional Agenda Item

McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System

Increase Congressional appropriations to address the approximate \$250 million in the backlog of critical maintenance on the MKARNS. Failure to do so continues to put the system at risk of a long-term navigation shutdown due to failure of waterway infrastructure such as locks and dams. Support and fund the on-time completion of the White River Entrance Channel Cut-off PED (Preconstruction, Engineering, and Design phase) in the US Army Corps of Engineers' Work Plan, at a cost of \$5.7 million per year for the next two years. The PED is the last hurdle before the project can be fully funded and constructed. Unaddressed, this problem, caused by the tendency of the White and Arkansas Rivers to merge together during flooding, will lead to a loss of navigation on the entire system. Finally, continue to support efforts to deepen the MKARNS to its 12-foot authorized depth, thereby increasing barge productivity by up to 40 percent. *2020 OneVoice Regional Agenda Item