



GREAT LAKES METRO CHAMBERS COALITION

2019 Public Policy Priorities

The Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition is a national collective of chambers of commerce across the Great Lakes region that jointly advocate on core policy issues, including water quality, immigration reform, trade, and transportation and infrastructure. Since its founding in 2008, the coalition has become a leading and effective voice on federal policy impacting the Great Lakes region.

Investing in Great Lakes Infrastructure



A safe and reliable multi-modal transportation system – including public transit, roads and highways, inland waterways and river navigation – is critical to the economy and quality of life in the Great Lakes

region. The Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition (GLMCC) supports major investments that infuse new, innovative ideas and resources into how regions can bolster transportation and infrastructure while maintaining focus on existing federal programs that need ongoing support. As Congress and the Administration consider transportation and infrastructure policy, GLMCC encourages support for:

- Increasing federal investment in the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) and Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) programs, that support public transit and infrastructure needs.
- Maintaining the Poe Lock and building a second Poe-sized lock at the Soo Locks, the only channel for shipping commodities into and out of Lake Superior.
- Fixing the Highway Trust Fund, a critically important program that is suffering from a structural revenue deficit.
- Directed federal spending for transformative infrastructure and transportation projects across the Great Lakes region.
- Comprehensive policy and regulatory development on autonomous vehicles / “Smart Cities” concepts, which will drive the future of our economy.

Talent Attraction



Attracting and retaining the best talent is a top priority of the businesses represented by the GLMCC.

Employer-driven short and long-term strategies developed in partnership with the public sector are needed to bolster job training and talent attraction through federal and regional policies. Long-term immigration reform is also needed to enhance the role that immigrants play in strengthening the quality of the talent pipeline, growing the population, contributing to the local tax base, and creating new businesses across the Great Lakes region. GLMCC will advocate for:

- Employer-driven federal policies that provide support to retrain incumbent workers, improve the skills of the underemployed, and support smart investments in higher education that provide critical financial aid for students.
- Comprehensive H-1B visa reform that increases the number of visas and allows Great Lakes economies to compete.
- Higher education policies that will incentivize and strengthen research and development activities, entrepreneurship and innovation in the Great Lakes region.
- Investments to support the growth in immigration hubs in the Great Lakes states.
- Reauthorization of the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program, which allows for investment in catalytic development projects.
- Maintaining the Employment Authorization for Certain H-4 Dependent Spouses Rule that would remove barriers to and create incentives for attracting international talent to help Great Lakes companies compete in a global marketplace.

Water Quality in the Great Lakes Region



One of the world's greatest natural resources is in our region - the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes are a major economic force, with the existence of more than 1.5 million jobs due to activities in the region. As the core

of what binds this coalition together, the GLMCC will continue to advocate for:

- Full funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), a \$300 million federal program that supports the five-lake basin.
- Prioritized investments for the Great Lakes in the Water Resources Development Act.
- Full use of the Harbor Maintenance Tax revenue for the Army Corps of Engineers' operational and maintenance activities. This is critically important for the Great Lakes as funds support the dredging of harbors, maintenance of breakwaters and the operation of the Soo Locks.

Balanced Trade Policy

Thoughtful and balanced trade policies are needed to support business growth in the Great Lakes states and the commercial relationships our region shares with the rest of the world. As trade policy discussions continue in Washington, GLMCC will support our members in advocating for legislation and trade deals that provide stability and predictability in the cost of doing business. GLMCC also will support our members in educating government officials regarding the impact of trade agreements and actions — including tariffs and quotas — on member companies and the Great Lakes region.

Facilitating secure and efficient trading between the United States and Canada also is a priority, and GLMCC will continue to advocate for fast and reliable border crossing and clearance procedures.



Energy Development

Communities across the Great Lakes are investing in a variety of energy sources including wind, solar and fossil energy. GLMCC supports and will advocate for federal policies that encourage innovation and development in the energy sector which will lead to job growth, balanced costs, and electricity reliability. GLMCC will also continue its advocacy efforts on:



- Continued investment in the Department of Energy's Fossil Energy (FE) R&D program that supports the development of new technologies. The National Energy Technology Laboratory in the Greater Pittsburgh region has led the development of significant energy innovation for the country, such as clean coal and CO2 capture, storage, and utilization.
- The passage of federal legislation to support an Appalachian storage hub and regional energy market, which would positively impact the Midwest economy.
- The passage of energy modernization legislation and approval of regulations that will boost competitiveness in the Great Lakes for energy development and support grid reliability.

Protecting Federal Assets Across The Great Lakes

There are important federal and defense assets across the Great Lakes region that play a critical role in the nation's security and represent significant economic impact for their respective communities. GLMCC is uniquely positioned to play a leadership role in highlighting the economic importance of federal and defense assets across the Great Lakes region to guard them against a future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process and federal budget cuts, as well as jointly advocate for new opportunities for these assets in the National Defense Authorization Act and other federal funding opportunities.

