



Legislative Priorities 2024

Christian County Business Development Corporation, d.b.a. Show Me Christian County, is a public-private nonprofit organization dedicated to economic development endeavors on behalf of the nearly 90,000 residents of Christian County, MO. SMCC strives to recruit, retain, & expand local businesses and skilled talent to positively impact the economic landscape of the communities we serve.

High Priority Initiatives

Listed below are items identified by business and community leaders in Christian County that are critical to economic development. Thank you for advocating for your district's economic drivers!

Positive impact on economic development:

Funding I-44 expansion - I-44 is the main corridor in southwest Missouri utilized heavily by business and industry. It is the region's premiere corridor used to move employees, visitors, and residents, with the value of goods transported increasing every year. Major delays from crashes significantly burden our businesses and the area's trucking industry financially and operationally.

Childcare and Workforce Retention: SMCC enthusiastically supports efforts to retain childcare professionals, train new childcare professionals, incentivize the expansion of childcare programs, and increase access and availability of care for both early childhood and school-aged children, especially in rural areas. We endorse full funding for Missouri One Start to train childhood educators and bills [SB975](#), [HB 1488](#) and [SB 742](#) regarding childcare tax credits/exemptions. This is an absolutely vital economic issue to our county and state, allowing working age adults to fully participate in the workforce.

Negative impact on economic development:

Revenue cutting legislation for municipalities - [HB2112](#), [HB2055](#), [HB2224](#), [HB2187](#), [SB1231](#), [SB1062](#)

All 7 incorporated municipalities in Christian County are heavily supported by sales tax. The passing of these bills would negatively impact general revenue for our communities, sometimes by as much as 45%. Vital infrastructure and services such as stormwater systems, police and public safety, public works, and many more necessities cannot operate as needed with the proposed reductions in funding via local sales tax revenue.

Spot Annexation - [SB 979](#) - As currently written, this annexation bill could negatively impact Christian County fire and ambulance districts. Additionally, it will set a precedent for future spot annexation throughout the state and make city infrastructure expansion difficult and costly, hindering economic investment from the private sector.

Other Legislation that Affects Christian County

Infrastructure: SMCC supports bills and appropriations funding infrastructure improvements and opposes legislation that negatively impacts funding. SMCC strongly opposes efforts to repeal or reduce the financial effectiveness of the statewide gas tax passed by Missouri voters. [SB953](#)

Match funding opportunities for local projects, like the **Governor's Transportation Cost Share Program**, are of high importance to our county and region as well. We encourage this program to be reinstated.



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Education and Workforce Development: School districts and community colleges play a vital role in retaining Missouri talent. SMCC prioritizes efforts to recruit, train, retain, and pay qualified teachers and staff, and we support local school districts' right and responsibility to make decisions for their districts on a local level.

- Although this is a temporary solution, [SB955](#) would increase teacher pay to assist in teacher recruitment and retention. We hope there is a permanent solution in the future, but in the meantime we support efforts to increase Missouri's teacher salaries.
- We do not support [SB1051](#) as this would allow the enrollment of nonresident students in public school districts.
- Continued funding for A+ program, for higher education and equity funding for community colleges.

Business Attraction: SMCC supports legislation that allows state and local governments to attract businesses into Missouri (including the **Missouri Works** program, [SB 1301](#), [HB 2479](#)).

We also highly encourage fully funding the **Missouri Partnership**, which is the state's partner agency who solely focuses on business attraction nationally and internationally. (Prioritize Missouri Partnership in EDAF)

The availability of workforce and the lack of available workforce housing has become a main concern for businesses and impacts business attraction. We support the **Workforce Housing** bills, [HB2240](#) and [HB 2407](#)

Economy: Economic concerns about inflation and recession are top of mind for employers in our region. SMCC encourages efforts to help Missouri remain competitive for high-paying jobs and innovative employers of choice, and expansion of existing business.

SMCC **supports** the following bills and programs:

- [HB2170](#) -Establishes the Missouri Rural Access to Capital Act to promote rural economic development
- Funding for **MoBucks Program** qualified-lending institutions to provide low-interest loans to help grow and expand economic opportunity across Missouri. By reducing the interest rate on certain loans borrowers can use to improve their businesses, the program helps Missouri financial institutions better serve Missouri-based companies and agricultural operations.
- [HB2253](#) - Establishes the "First-Time Business Owner Savings Account Act" and authorizes a tax deduction for contributions to a savings account dedicated to starting a new business
- [HB2151](#) - Increases matching state funds available for various regional planning commissions
- [HB2142](#) - Modifies provisions relating to an income tax deduction for broadband internet expansion grants