

**TO: SAM DAWSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



**FROM: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: 2012 FEDERAL AGENDA**

**STATUS: ADOPTED**

**DATE: December 15, 2011**

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board of Directors of The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce adopt the following statement as policy:

**STATEMENT:** The Chamber supports the following positions for the 2012 Federal Agenda:

**AEROSPACE**

- Retention and expansion of existing aircraft and engine MRO work performed in San Antonio and the ability to compete for future workload allocations
- Maximization of existing aerospace facilities and workforces, including the efficiencies and qualities developed by private industry partners
- Maintaining and growing military sustainment jobs in San Antonio
- Generate legislation and support for HUB Zone status for Port San Antonio

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Include funding for federal courthouse for the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division in Administration's FY 2013 Budget
- Secure U. S. Air Force approval of the Kelly Field revised Joint Use and Joint Use Operating Agreement (Port San Antonio)
- Request Congress give the Administrator of the General Services Administration (GSA) the authority to give preference to Port San Antonio when entering into leases on behalf of federal agencies and departments seeking anti-terrorism, force protected office space
- Continue to develop support for the acquisition and development of land and facilities supporting Lackland Air Force Base (Port San Antonio)

**ENERGY & THE ENVIRONMENT**

- To the extent Congress continues to promote renewable and efficiency projects through incentives, allow CPS Energy and other public power entities to have direct access to comparable incentives that would allow such utilities to build renewable energy projects at a lower cost to ratepayers and begin construction more quickly, leading to more immediate job creation in our community

**HEALTH CARE & BIOSCIENCE**

- Find a permanent solution to the Sustainable Growth Rate formula so that patient access to care is maintained and physicians are fairly paid for their services.
- Support initiatives that encourage shared responsibility among patient and providers to reduce federal spending rather than imposing blunt cuts to reimbursement that jeopardize access to care
- Address legal and regulatory barriers that prevent providers from delivering more cost effective care through clinical integration

- Encourage fairness in the health information technology incentive payment program so that hospitals with multiple campuses are properly compensated
- Opposes cuts to Medicare Part B and Average Sales Price (ASP) which negatively affect access for patients facing grievous illnesses and modify a market driven system that currently works

## **HIGHER EDUCATION**

- U.T. Health Science Center
  - Preserve or enhance funding at \$31.748B for the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
  - Preserve or enhance funding at \$762.5M for the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA), which includes:
    - Funding for Title VII (health professions) and Title VIII (nursing) programs to address pressing health care workforce concerns
    - Funding for the Area Health and Education Centers (AHEC) at \$75 million
    - Funding at \$26.5 million for the National Poison Center Program for poison prevention and treatment information/services
  - Preserve or enhance funding at \$317.5 million for Direct Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Indirect Medical Education (IME)
  - Preserve or enhance physician reimbursement rates under Medicare and Medicaid
- Maintain the Pell Grant Protection Act at \$28.6 billion (UTSA)
- Support funding for Hispanic Serving Institutions through Title V (Part A) of the Higher Education Act (UTSA)

## **HOSPITALITY & TOURISM**

- Amend the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) currently affecting international visitors to the US at a great loss to our national economy
- Support the addition of lands into the formal boundaries owned by the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) to include lands in Bexar and Wilson counties suitable for inclusion into the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (SAAN) and the Secretary of Interior's nomination of SAAN as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- Establishes cybersecurity as a national priority, identifies roles and responsibilities in securing our information systems and provides sufficient resources to accomplish those goals
- Additional federal cyber security resources from organizations such as the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Energy
- Ensure funding for the growth of the 24<sup>th</sup> Air Force Cyber Mission in the form of new facilities designed to enable mission accomplishment; tools for offensive and defensive measures and process that focus on rapidly enhancing capabilities
- Fund cyber education in high schools focusing on curriculum, internships and certifications

## **IMMIGRATION& HOMELAND SECURITY**

- Immigration reform at the federal level and policies that: 1) ensure the safety and security of our Nation's borders; 2) increase the availability and improvement to the process for obtaining work visas; and 3) implement a fair process to address the citizenship of undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States
- Full funding for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and San Antonio Urban Area funding for key law enforcement preparedness programs
- Support increases in the number of employer-sponsored visas to retain technology-based university graduates and personnel with critical skills not currently available in the regional domestic markets

## **LABOR**

- Continue to oppose proposed regulations that dictate rigid work rules, wages and benefits and reject regulations that introduce conflict into employer-employee relations, including "Card Check", the "Employee Free Choice Act" and the "Paycheck Fairness Act"

## **MANUFACTURING**

- Develop a national, portable, manufacturing skills certification programs
- Establish tax incentives for workforce training programs to re-alignment/re-training available workforce skills with current Industry job requirements
- Implement a comprehensive national plan for growth of the U.S. manufacturing industry to include 1) addressing policies that contribute to shortages of critical national resources inhibiting manufacture of essential goods and 2) ensuring the benefits of regulation justify the costs in terms of employment, productivity and international competitive position

## **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

- Center for the Intrepid (CFI). Ensure adequate operations and maintenance funding is provided for the CFI during the duration of its mission
- Air Force (AF) Basic Military Training (BMT) Campus at Lackland. Ensure all BMT Campus-related projects remain approved after planned Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Military Construction (MILCON) pause. Remaining projects include Dorms 5-8 and Classroom Dining Facilities 3-4 (\$390M+); reduces life cycle costs to maintain existing BMT facilities and operational impacts for all AF basic training
- Wilford Hall Ambulatory Care Center at Lackland. Two of four phases already funded/awarded, with following phases projected for funding in FY12 (\$161M) and FY15 (\$80.2M) Ensure funding continues
- Randolph Commercial Gate MILCON project—\$8.7M/4,600 Square Feet (SF) plus supporting facilities (in Air Force Future Years Defense Program [FYDP])
- Camp Bullis Tactical Equipment Maintenance Facility (TEMF) MILCON project—\$11.4M/21,000 SF, plus additional supporting facilities
- F-35 mission. Ensure the next round of basing decisions recommends bringing the F-35 (Joint Strike Fighter) to Lackland, to support an operational mission and/or a training mission
- Lackland Interfaith Religious Center Phase 1 MILCON project—\$17.5M/36K SF (in AF FYDP)
- Randolph East Gate MILCON project \$6.3M/1,000 SF plus supporting facilities (in AF FYDP)
- Request Congress/Department of Defense provide updated policy/process to allow Restoration and Maintenance recapitalization, particularly for historic facilities

- Fort Sam Houston Advanced Individual Training (AIT) Complex. Currently in Army Program (\$67M for Barracks, Battalion Headquarters, 6 Company Ops/283,000 SF supports medical training at Fort Sam Houston)

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

- Re-authorize the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) with specific changes to the 100% requirement and the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) standards
- Support funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) that will increase the percentage funded by the federal government from 18% to 40% as originally intended
- Support Impact Aid, which makes up 50% of the total budgets for Lackland ISD, Ft. Sam Houston ISD, and Randolph Field ISD

### **REGULATORY REFORM**

- Each year federal agencies issue approximately 4,000 new regulations at an annual cost of nearly \$1.1 trillion. Federal regulations should be based on sound science and technical analysis and undergo rigorous technical analysis to ensure that they are cost-effective, flexible, and minimize regulatory burdens on business

### **SMALL BUSINESS**

- Oppose proposed changes to Federal Acquisition Regulations that would eliminate the 5% minority-owned small business goal for federal contracts
- Support legislation and fiscal policy that expands access to working capital, bonding, and long-term financing to small business through the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI's) and continue funding for SBA in the microloan, technical assistance programs and 504 programs
- Continue financial support of Department of Defense sponsored Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)
- Support the Regulations Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act (REINS Act) of 2011
- Examine the proposed size standards for SBA's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

### **TRANSPORTATION**

- Reauthorization of federal surface transportation and aviation administration bills at levels that maintain or expand current funding
- Expansion of the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and credit assistance for Alamo RMA projects along US 281 and Loop 1604
- Small starts funding in the amount of \$150 million to fund Modern Downtown Streetcar route extensions (VIA Metropolitan Transit)
- Support for TIGER IV and other federal funding grants opportunities that further development of public transportation and/or multi-modal projects in the San Antonio/Bexar County region (VIA Metropolitan Transit)
- Additional funding for Fort Sam Houston/Harry Wurzbach Transportation Improvements (City of San Antonio)
- Identify and solicit grant funding for infrastructure, transportation and flood control improvement projects at Port San Antonio, such as Quintana Road Re-alignment \$7.8million (Port San Antonio)
- Support legislation to expedite projects providing new or improved rail passenger service in existing rail corridors or on existing rail lines as well as ancillary projects. Seek

provisions in the next transportation bill supporting development of projects that improve passenger and freight rail service in congested corridors critical to international trade (Lone Star Rail)

### **WATER**

- Secure \$10M in the FY13 Energy and Water appropriations bill from within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Construction General Account for reimbursing Bexar County for advancing a portion of the federal share of the San Antonio Channel Improvement Project (Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration and Recreation Project)
- Pass legislation authorizing the Bureau of Reclamation to collaborate with SAWS on the Brackish Groundwater Desalination Project
- Maintain SAWS locally approved choice of water disinfection by defeating legislation (Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Act) mandating a "one size fits all" disinfection technology
- Authorize and appropriate legislation for the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds for water utilities to improve infrastructure

### **WORKFORCE**

- Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), increasing the ability through transfer of funds for greater local flexibility to deal with local business needs and broadening the coverage of understandable performance measures
- Allow current workforce development funds to be used as a subsidy for small businesses to provide paid internships for high school students in industries that have a workforce gap to fill
- Preserve federal funding for nurse, allied health professional, and physician education, including graduate medical residency slots and identify pathways for the recruitment of foreign trained nurses while a national solution to our nursing shortage is achieved (Health care)
- Increase investment in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) educational growth to support rapidly changing workforce and industrial demands