

NCCC 2011 PUBLIC POLICY MANUAL

The National City Chamber of Commerce is the platform for business to provide leadership, education and advocacy so that the National City area thrives in the 21st century.

This public policy manual was compiled to educate our members and to communicate to our elected officials and decision makers where the National City Chamber of Commerce stands on numerous issues important to the National City business community.

This manual includes contact information for your elected representatives at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as tips on how to communicate with them.

At all levels of government, well-intentioned policies often have unintended

consequences. Without input from the business community, these policies could adversely impact the ability of businesses to generate jobs and to create higher standards of living. However, when business leaders communicate with their elected officials, better public policies result.

The Chamber develops its policies and practices based on the underlying principle that creating and promoting a pro-business environment at the state and local level will directly enhance the base of private enterprise and quality of life. This base is essential to maintaining a vibrant market-based economy. In determining a position on proposed legislation and other public policy issues, the Chamber is guided by its mission to build a stronger local economy with emphasis on the following areas.

PRO-BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

1. Support pro-business issues.
2. Encourage and support pro-business involvement in local boards and commissions.
3. Take an active role in working and educating elected officials regarding proposed business legislation that has an impact on the business community.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

1. Encourage and recommend, where appropriate, the application of innovative technologies to improve the movement of goods and people in the city and greater region. Support legislation that enhances business climate.
2. Support improvements to major National City corridors, to enhance economic development and provide a positive image of the city.
3. Support efforts to maximize potential for job creation and growth at the San Diego International Airport.
4. Support a reliable, useful, sustainable and cost effective transportation and regulatory system.
5. Support development of modern utility infrastructure in the city.

TAXATION AND GOVERNMENT FINANCE

1. Take an active role in preserving and expanding the Enterprise Zone's benefits to employers and employees within the city.
2. Solicit state programs to secure business tax credits for targeted work training programs.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

1. Monitor and provide recommendations to new Workers' Compensation reform measures to reduce costs to businesses.
2. Monitor and provide recommendations to reduce health care costs for employers.
3. Support and promote, when appropriate, the preparation of cost/benefit analysis ensuring economic impacts are weighed before the imposition of regulatory statutes.
4. Monitor new legislation to regulate employer and employee relations.
5. Support the development of workforce housing.

EDUCATION AND DIVERSITY

1. Support and promote legislation that provides for training, tax credits and other incentives that assist local businesses.

2. Support and promote training programs that provide incentives for local companies to hire vocational students.
3. Work with the local educational systems and support legislation that provides for a well-trained flexible workforce in the South Bay region.
4. Support programs encouraging or enabling internships for youth.
5. Support the San Diego Workforce Partnership's plans to meet the needs of local employers and to promote quality jobs and wages and decrease poverty.

LINKING BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT

1. Monitor local and statewide legislation as it pertains to policy priorities and communicate the information to the Chamber membership.
2. Support programs that identify the issues facing our community neighborhoods, integrate government resources and work with community leadership to improve the quality of work life for the residents of National City.
3. Continue encouraging members to email their federal, state and local representatives to provide support or opposition letters to legislative issues.
4. Improve the working relationship with local, state and federal representatives.



5. Simplify advocacy efforts with the City Council by providing concise position papers on various issues impacting the business community.
6. Continue with periodic breakfast events linking the business community with local elected leaders and City Hall staff.
7. Participate in the city budget process as it pertains to business, resource issues and finding alternatives to increases in fines, penalties and fees for businesses. Work to ensure that preferences for city contracts are awarded to National City businesses.
8. Partner with local chambers when appropriate to develop and coordinate a yearly lobbying trip to Sacramento and Washington DC for Chamber members.
9. Communicate with business associations to identify areas of concern and develop partnerships.
10. Coordinate opportunities when appropriate for the Chamber membership to attend City Council meetings to offer advice on business related agenda items.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1. Support projects in the Port of San Diego that improve efficiency and address tourism and technology for the betterment of the business community.
2. Monitor environmental issues facing the Port of San Diego and its effect on the National City business community.
3. Monitor ongoing post-9/11 Port security assessments and recommendations to the Port Commissioners.

4. Monitor and establish positions on local, state and federal legislation that affect the Port of San Diego.
5. Work with the Port of San Diego to promote trade opportunities with foreign countries.
6. Support cooperation between the port, government and the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Support private enterprise and development projects within National City and the region to enhance economic development.
2. Support business attraction, retention and growth by retaining a reasonable level of city business license tax structure, reasonable fees and licenses, a skilled local workforce and retention and promotion of the Enterprise Zone hiring and sales tax credits.
3. Support small and/or disadvantaged business assistance programs (grants, loans, workshops, etc.).
4. Support efforts to reform tort/frivolous lawsuits related to businesses.
5. Monitor and be involved in the general plan update (land use, planning, housing and zoning) issues that affect the business community.
6. Encourage city policy to support tourism and enhance the city's image.
7. Support the implementation of the City of National City's Business Outreach, Attraction, and Retention Strategy.

HEALTH CARE

1. Encourage positive incentives for business to insure employees.
2. Support initiatives which streamline government regulations to increase efficiency and reduce overall administrative burdens.
3. Support and promote the reduction of paperwork and administrative cost.
4. Support federal and state reforms that allow small businesses to obtain group coverage and increased advantages from tax deductible medical care saving accounts and association plans.

ENVIRONMENT

1. Oversee environmental issues and recommend support for policies (such as the "*Green Port Policy*") that meet the following objectives:
 - a. Protecting human health and the environment.
 - b. Ensuring fair and financially responsible implementation of environmental policy through reasoned cost/benefit analysis.
2. Promote programs and efforts that:
 - a. Encourage the creation of environmentally sound policies that reward responsible business practices.
 - b. Provide businesses with energy saving advice and instruction.
 - c. Help businesses develop and transfer new technology.
 - d. Establish realistic goals and encourage industries to participate in reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions.
 - e. Promote or sustain jobs.

WRITING EFFECTIVE LETTERS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS

Writing a personalized letter to your legislators is still the most effective way to express your opinions. It is impossible for elected officials to know how every bill they vote on will affect your business. A well-written letter will often help lawmakers understand the critical elements of pending legislation before they take a position for or against a particular bill.

Address for U.S. Representatives:
The Honorable (full name)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Address for U.S. Senators:
The Honorable (full name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510



1. Include your complete return address to prove that you are a constituent.
 2. Write on one issue per letter and identify the bill number (e.g., H.R. 215) in the first paragraph.
 3. Keep your message local, personal and concise. Provide specific examples of how the legislation will impact your business, industry and employees. Try to write no more than one page.
 4. Above all, maintain a professional tone in your letter. We know that you feel strongly about your views, but showing anger toward your legislators will only cause them to discount your opinion. You need to foster a positive, and ideally long-term, relationship with your legislators if you want them to be receptive.
 5. Provide background on your industry and the issue. Don't assume that your legislators are familiar with the impact any bill will have on your business or that they have already taken a position on it.
 6. Clearly state the action you would like your lawmaker to take, e.g., "please vote against H.R. 215."
 7. Ask for a reply that outlines your lawmaker's position.
- Choose your battles. While you should try to build a personal relationship with your elected officials, you should not write so often that you become known solely for your letter writing or for having an opinion on one issue.

SAMPLE LETTER TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Sample Letter to Members of Congress

1 John Doe
President
ABC Computer Company
901 National City Blvd.
National City, CA 91950

May 9, 2006

The Honorable Bob Filner
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Filner:

2 I am writing to urge you to vote against H.R. 619, a bill that would increase the minimum wage to \$6.00 an hour. Any increase in the minimum wage would mean significant job loss, higher labor costs for my small business, and higher costs for consumers.

4 5 A wage hike will also undermine efforts to move people from welfare to work, as employers, forced to pay more, will hire better skilled workers. A government-mandated wage increase is simply government-mandated inflation. Mandated wages are bad for small businesses, the economy, and for my business in particular.

As a member of the National City Chamber of Commerce, I am kept up to date on all business issues, and will be watching this vote closely. Again, I urge you to vote against H.R. 619. Please contact me with your position on this critical business issue.

6 7 Sincerely,

John Doe
President
ABC Computer Company



PHONING YOUR LEGISLATORS

When you call your elected officials, a staff member will answer the phone. You should request, but do not expect, to be connected to your legislator. Usually you will be asked to leave a detailed message with the staff member. You may also ask to be transferred to the chief of staff or the legislative assistant who handles that particular issue.

Emphasize that you are a constituent. Be sure to leave your full name and address so that the legislator can mail you a response.

Explain your standpoint on the legislation with as much detail as you are comfortable with. You should always be prepared to explain why you do or do not support a specific bill, so keep your communications nearby to use as a reference.

If you are speaking to a staff member, ask for his or her insight and the member's position.

SENDING E-MAILS TO YOUR LEGISLATORS

As e-mail became a mainstream form of communication, we have often heard that legislative offices could not keep up with the large quantity of messages that they were receiving and that they were doubtful of their validity. As a result of a recent study, however, we have learned that technology is now in place to handle the increased volume of e-mails, and that personalized e-mails can actually have a lot of influence on some legislators' positions. Here are some tips for getting involved:

- Send detailed, personalized e-mails to your members of Congress' offices. As long as you include your name, address and Zip code, the impact of specific legislation on your business, and your reason for your position, e-mails are as well received as personal letters sent on letterhead.
- Quality is more persuasive than quantity. One well-supported and rational argument can carry more weight than even hundreds of copies of an identical letter.
- Know your audience. When we ask you to get involved on behalf of the business community, you can be assured that we have done research on your members of Congress' positions for you and have represented their views accurately. Two things often need to be pointed out to frustrated activists:
 - Your message will not be processed unless you live in that legislator's district.
 - Staffers remember being insulted or bombarded by letters and will not help those people or organizations in the future.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

FEDERAL

President Barack Obama
Vice President Joe Biden
Chief of Staff: Bill Daley
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500
Comment Line: (202) 456-1111
Switchboard: (202) 456-1414
Fax: (202) 456-2461
TTY/TDD Comment Line: (202) 456-6213
president@whitehouse.gov

U.S. SENATE

Senator Barbara Boxer
Chief of Staff: Laura Schiller
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001
Phone: (202) 224-3553
Fax: (202) 228-2382
District Office
600 B Street, Suite 2240
San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: (619) 239-3884

Senator Diane Feinstein
Chief of Staff: Chris Thompson
331 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510-0001
Phone: (202) 224-3841
Fax: (202) 228-3954
District Office
750 B Street, Suite 1030
San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: (619) 231-9712
Fax: (619) 231-1108

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Congressman Bob Filner
50th District
Chief of Staff: Tony Buckles
2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
District Office
333 F Street, Suite A
Chula Vista, CA 91910
Phone: (619) 422-5963
Fax: (619) 422-7290

STATE

Governor Jerry Brown
Chief of Staff: Anne Gust
Office of the Governor
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-2841
Fax: (916) 445-4633

Attorney General
Kamala D. Harris
1300 I Street, 11th Floor
Sacramento, CA. 95814-2919
(916) 445-9555
Fax: (916) 323-5341

State Treasurer
Bill Lockyer
915 Capitol Mall, Room 110
Sacramento, CA. 95814-4810
Phone (916) 653-2995
Fax: (916) 653-3125
District Office
304 South Broadway, #550
Los Angeles, CA. 90013-1224
Phone (213) 620-4467
Fax: (213) 620-6309

STATE SENATE
Senator Juan Vargas
District 40
State Capitol, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-4040
Fax: (916) 327-3522
District Office
637 3rd Ave., Suite A-1
Chula Vista, CA. 91910
Phone: (619) 409-7690
Fax: (619) 409-7688

STATE ASSEMBLY
Assembly Member Ben Hueso
District 79
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0079
Tel: (916) 319-2079
Fax: (916) 319-2179
District Office
678 Third Avenue, Suite 105
Chula Vista, CA 91910
Tel: (619) 409-7979
Fax: (619) 409-9270

COUNTY

Supervisor Greg Cox
District 1
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: (619) 531-5511
Fax: (619) 235-0644

CITY
City Hall
1243 National City Blvd.
National City, CA 91950
Mayor Ron Morrison
(619) 336-4236
rmorrison@nationalcityca.gov
Vice Mayor Alejandra Sotelo-Solis
(619) 336-4283
asotelosolis@nationalcityca.gov

Councilmember Luis Natividad
(619) 336-4238
lnatividad@nationalcityca.gov
Councilmember Mona Rios
(619) 336-4237
monarios@nationalcityca.gov
Councilmember Rosalie Zarate
(619) 336-4234
rzarate@nationalcityca.gov



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NATIONAL CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

901 National City Boulevard | National City, CA 91950-3203 | P: 619.477.9339 | F: 619.477.5018

Email: thechamber@nationalcitychamber.org | www.nationalcitychamber.org