

# 2023 Advocacy @Work



The Chamber of Catawba County supports public policy that promotes a strong business climate and fosters economic development.

## Workforce Development Initiatives

We support investments in education that increase educational attainment and promote affordable educational opportunities. We support policies which promote the availability and affordability of childcare for the current workforce and promote high quality early learning for the future workforce. We support policies that help the previously incarcerated and those dealing with mental health challenges or substance use disorders to integrate into the workforce.

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## Infrastructure Investment

We support investments in the infrastructure required to support a strong economy, including roads, broadband, water/sewer and housing. We support forward thinking investments that will support the future economy.

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## Smart Taxation

We support tax policies that lower rates on business owners and return tax revenues to the communities in which they are collected. Governments should avoid taxes on business investment and innovation and that disadvantage US firms in international trade.

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## Appropriate Regulations

We believe that regulations must achieve government objectives in the least restrictive manner possible while creating minimum negative consequences. Government should not place unfunded mandates on businesses to enforce government regulations.

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## Affordable Healthcare

We support policies that make health insurance affordable and accessible, and create insurance options, especially for small businesses.

# @work

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# 2023 Legislative Agenda



In support of these guiding principles, the Chamber of Catawba County supports the following specific legislative initiatives.

1. **Support Transportation Finance Reform** that replaces the fuel tax and ensures that all users are equitably supporting the construction and maintenance of North Carolina's roads and highways.

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2. **Support the Completion of Catawba County road projects** including NC-150, Startown Road and technical improvements to the currently approved NC-321 project.

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3. **Improve our Educational System by:**
  - a. Supporting programs that promote the development, recruitment and retention of early childhood workforce, K-12 staff and teachers, and community college instructors and personnel.
  - b. Supporting school report card reform that places additional emphasis on student growth and recognizes additional ways to measure achievement in students beyond standardized testing.
  - c. Supporting additional capital funding for school construction including state funding through current appropriations or a statewide school bond.
  - d. Supporting calendar flexibility to promote educational attainment including allowing first semester final exams to be taken before winter holiday and to align high school schedules with community college schedules for those students who are dually enrolled.
  - e. Supporting additional funding for and centralization of North Carolina's higher education grant-based programs, as well as, increased federal funding for the Pell Grant.

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4. **Preserve Current Local Revenue Streams** for local government and oppose unfunded mandates on local governments and small businesses.

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5. **Support Funding for a State Park in Catawba County.**

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6. **Support Medicaid Expansion** as a means to increase labor availability and reduce the cost of health insurance for small businesses.

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7. **Allow State Economic Development Officials** to have greater flexibility in granting incentives based on capital investment in addition to job growth and location.

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8. **Support Programs that Strengthen the Early Childhood Workforce**, to help reduce the cost and expand the availability of high quality childcare.

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