

2025 Guiding Principles



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.

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.

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.

Appropriate Regulations

We believe that regulations must achieve government objectives in the least restrictive manner possible while creating minimum negative consequences. The government should avoid imposing obligations on businesses or delegating duties to different government entities without ensuring there is adequate financial support.

Affordable Healthcare

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

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1055 Southgate Corporate Park SW • Hickory, North Carolina 28602

(p) 828-328.6111 • (f) 828-328.1175

www.catawbachamber.org • (FB) /catawbachamber • (IG) @catawbachamber

2025 Legislative Agenda

The Chamber
OF CATAWBA COUNTY
Working for business



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

1. Advance Comprehensive Transportation Improvements by prioritizing the following:

- a. The expedited reconstruction of I-40, following the damage caused by Hurricane Helene, should utilize all available resources and strategies to minimize disruptions, given the significant time and cost implications for businesses relying on this key route.
- b. The completion of Catawba County road projects including NC-150, Startown Road, and technical improvements to the currently approved NC-321 project.
- c. State and federal funding for the Hickory Regional Airport for runway extension, terminal renovations, hangar development, and other upgrades in preparation of potential commercial service.
- d. Transportation Finance Reform that supplements the fuel tax and ensures that all users are equitably supporting the construction and maintenance of North Carolina's roads and highways.

2. Support policies that guarantee energy reliability and affordability for both the present and future generations.

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 at the state and local levels to keep pace with our growing community and ensure every student has a quality learning environment.
- 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, for both public and private institutions, as well as, increased federal funding for the Pell Grant.

4. Support Funding for a State Park in Catawba County which includes the NC Wilderness Gateway Trail.

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

6. Support Initiatives that Expand the Availability of Affordable and High Quality Childcare, including incentives for businesses that assist their employees with childcare benefits and funding programs aimed at creative solutions to the prevailing childcare shortages.

7. Support policies that foster the development of income aligned housing by streamlining regulatory processes, embracing thoughtful strategic planning, and leveraging public-private partnerships.

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