

Preamble

As an advocate for business and agriculture, the Chamber believes in free enterprise. We are pro-entrepreneurial and support the capitalist system.

Business, including agriculture, is the basis of economic growth and prosperity. We believe that government has a role in ensuring the health and welfare of us as citizens. Part of that role is to collect taxes and fees to pay for necessary services for society. Our duty as a business advocate is to ensure that the regulations on business and the taxes and fees collected for services are not excessive.

We believe in local control and authority and citizen involvement. While we believe in individual freedom and private property rights, we also believe in personal responsibility. We recognize that there will be differences between industries in Montana. What is good for business and agriculture is generally good for Montana. The role of government is to provide those services that business cannot. Government services that the private sector can provide should be considered for privatization.

Administration

Basic Philosophy

The Chamber believes that government, no matter what level, should operate as efficiently and openly as possible. Any governmental entity should conduct business on a competitive basis. That entity should encourage local participation on contracts for goods and services to "client" businesses (local businesses for local government, state businesses for Montana government). We should not grant rule-making authority lightly, or completely, to governmental agencies. We have the obligation to involve ourselves in rule-making decisions. The Chamber opposes the shifting of mandated duties to lower levels of government or private entities without the funding to carry out those mandates. We will pursue coordination and consolidation of duties, regulations, and licensing whenever economically feasible. Cutting governmental bureaucracy and removing excessive regulations remain a high priority for us.

Specific Issues

Local Services

The Chamber encourages its members, the business community, and local governing bodies to use the services and expertise of local professionals and consultants whenever possible.

Elimination/Privatization/Consolidation

The Chamber supports using the most efficient and effective means of providing government services by streamlining governmental services, privatizing services government units whenever effective, appropriate and economical.