

GrowSC Agenda

As South Carolina's business community emerges from the COVID-19 closures, South Carolina's small businesses need state government to work with us as a partner in recovery. Our 22 small business organizations from across our state believe that action on the nine issues listed below will allow our businesses to get back to doing what they do best – creating jobs and serving as the bedrock of our vibrant communities.

Get Our State Back to Work

- **Small Business Funding** – We support a plan to set aside at least \$100 million in CARES Act funding to help provide critical funding to small, minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.
- **Liability Protections for Businesses** – Provide that businesses or institutions acting in good faith and following local, state, and/or federal guidelines to prevent COVID exposure are protected from liability absent clear and convincing evidence of gross negligence. These protections should also be expanded to provide "Good Samaritan" protections for manufacturers that have switched production to provide products to fight COVID-19. Potential litigation from employees who may have contracted COVID-19 from their employer needs to be sent to the workers' compensation system.
- **Unemployment Insurance Hold Harmless** – Layoffs that stemmed from COVID-19 shutdowns should not affect a business' experience rating for unemployment insurance. The state should also work to refill the unemployment trust fund without undue burden on businesses struggling to recover.
- **Prioritize School Re-Opening** – We urge the General Assembly and the State Department of Education to create a strategic plan for re-opening schools to allow parents to get back to work while protecting the health of students, teachers, and staff. While we appreciate the focus on summer reading programs, we need to be laser-focused on schools opening this fall and using innovative methods learned from the COVID-19 shutdown to ensure the state's workforce may get back to work so businesses may fully recover.
- **Increase Access to Childcare** – We call on the Department of Social Services to actively seek solutions to expand the accessibility of childcare options. As with schools, the economy will not be able to fully re-open if half of our state's childcare centers are closed.
- **Protect the Workforce and our Students** – Our state needs to ensure sufficient funding and a transparent distribution model for COVID-19 testing and Personal Protection Equipment for healthcare, educational institutions, and private-sector workers throughout our state.

Provide for Future Growth

- **New Economic Development Incentives** – We ask the General Assembly to create a new incentive program aimed at attracting American companies to bring back manufacturing operations to South Carolina. We also ask that the 2020-2021 budget prioritize shovel-ready economic development projects that will create and sustain new jobs when the General Assembly returns.
- **Broadband Access** – COVID-19 exposed the stark divide between the haves and have-nots on broadband access. We need a long-term commitment to extending access for education, healthcare, and to support a remote workforce.
- **Jump Start Local Economies Through Aggressive Tourism Promotion** – We support efforts for new state investments in restarting our state's vital travel and tourism industry.

