

2025 – 2026
PUBLIC AFFAIRS &
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

MISSION AND PURPOSE

The mission of the Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce through its government affairs activities and political advocacy is to represent and protect the interests of the Douglas County business community. To this end, the chamber monitors issues and activities of local, state and federal government and, when appropriate, takes positions of support or opposition on behalf of business. In further pursuit of the most business-friendly environment possible, the chamber will, solicit pro-business, chamber-friendly candidates to serve on commissions and run for public office. The RACC board of directors will endorse candidates for public office when it determines the mission of the chamber will be best served by said candidate's election to office.

The chamber weighs in on a number of business issues. Our members should review RACC's *Business Perspectives* e-newsletter and "Chamber News" emails for positions and "Calls to Action" on specific bills and legislation. The chamber has an "Advocacy" section on its website dedicated to political action on behalf of business. The following pages identify the general public affairs and legislative initiatives of highest importance to the Roseburg Area Chamber in 2025-2026.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC AFFAIRS ISSUES

General

- Foster a business-friendly, collaborative environment and open communications among and between RACC, its members and the business community and local government entities.
- Monitor, advocate and communicate about tax, license and fiscal policy issues that affect the RACC membership and the general business community.

County/City Specifics

- *Transportation Infrastructure*
Transportation infrastructure funding is critical to economic development in our community, and as such is a major priority of the RACC. We will research local transportation infrastructure proposals and projects and actively support those deemed beneficial to local business and commerce.
- *Economic Development*
RACC will support local initiatives that facilitate economic growth and development for Douglas County. RACC will support the efforts of community partners, local governments and other institutions and organizations to improve Roseburg and Douglas County's competitiveness in attracting new jobs and growing community investment. We will support local initiatives that reduce the costs of job creation. It is also our commitment to ensure home-grown businesses have no reason to look elsewhere when considering expansion and that prospective businesses will find Douglas County an unquestionable first choice. RACC will monitor how local economic development funds are spent and advocate for best use for economic and business development.
- *Budget Priorities/Fiscal Responsibility/Government Efficiency*
RACC believes each local government entity should maintain a general objective that expenditures not increase at rates greater than population and inflation. Exceptions would be made conditionally for capital improvement projects needed for infrastructure. Taxes should be used equitably to provide services and programs that benefit economic growth and the health and welfare of citizens. All levels of local government must be prepared to prioritize their needs to prepare for a future that holds the potential for less state/federal financial support. Decision-making processes and policies should consider impact on private-sector job creation or private-sector job elimination.

2025-2026 Public Affairs & Legislative Agenda

- *Local Transient Lodge Tax*

The RACC will continue to monitor use of transient lodging tax dollars (TLT) to ensure compliance with Oregon law and best use of funds for the promotion of tourism and support of the hotel and hospitality industry. The RACC will monitor and advocate for local businesses, any proposals to increase or change existing city and/or state TLT or the creation of a new countywide tax.

City Specifics

- *Transportation System Development Charges (SDCs)*

The RACC will monitor the city's transportation SDCs, advocating past reductions remain in effect and/or support business-friendly negotiated options.

- *Other System Development Charges (SDCs)*

The RACC will monitor and potentially weigh-in on the city's sewer, water, storm water and parks system development charges.

- *Urban Growth Boundary Expansion (UGB)*

The RACC will continue to support UGB expansion as it relates to business, commercial and industrial growth and development.

STATE LEGISLATIVE & PUBLIC AFFAIRS ISSUES

Through its professional staff, with the support of its Government Affairs Team, RACC will promote and enhance mutually beneficial relations among its members, the business community, regional/statewide partners and Oregon legislators in order to address the following issues:

- *Natural Resources/Forest Management and Timber Harvest*

RACC will advocate for and support increased timber production on state-held lands. As federal payments diminish and ultimately cease, the need for proper forest management that allows for harvest and reforestation is imperative to the economic growth and sustainability of our community. RACC will work with local, state and federal officials and entities, business and timber- industry leaders to seek implementation of an active management plan by the BLM.

- *Employment/Labor*

RACC would support legislation to remove the 10-hour daily overtime statute for manufacturers; RACC supports a flexible weekly overtime standard, mandating overtime payment for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. RACC opposes inflexible daily overtime requirements and BOLI rule revision mandates potentially resulting in double overtime pay for the same hour(s) worked. RACC will continue to monitor impacts, weighing in as needed, of Ag Overtime Law passed in 2022, which RACC opposed. RACC supports legislation that would restore employer scheduling flexibility without limited employee ability to work overtime if they choose. And, support the right of employers and employees to agree to overtime and maximum working hours.

RACC supports permanent statewide preemption of local employment regulations, supports legislation that creates sensible meal and rest-break policies that give employees flexibility scheduling work hours, meals and rest break periods without penalties for employers. RACC opposes predictive scheduling mandates.

RACC continues to oppose legislation increasing Oregon OSHA penalties and potential legislation mandating a blanket ergonomic standard for Oregon employers. Oppose any expansion of OSHA authority to cite or penalize employers, including opposing increases in OSHA enforcement staff.

RACC will support legislation reforming key elements of Oregon's family leave law so it is in alignment with federal regulations. RACC opposes any attempts to expand mandated paid or unpaid leave and mandated paid family-leave legislation, paid for either by employee or employer.

RACC will continue to monitor the new Paid Leave Oregon program, which RACC opposed. RACC will oppose any legislation that would increase taxes paid by employers (as a tax, any increase would require a 3/5 majority vote).

RACC will advocate for closer alignment of all Oregon leave laws with federal leave laws and, support legislation that removes duplicate family leave benefits under state and federal laws.

RACC continues to support legislation that would strengthen provisions for denial of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits for workplace misconduct. RACC opposes any legislation expanding the use of UI benefits beyond intended use, including legislative "sweeps" of UI funds, the diversion of UI funds for striking workers or employees on family or medical leave and/or for job training purposes. Oppose legislation or rules that would eliminate the work-search requirement for UI benefit eligibility.

RACC supports the right of employers to require blanket post-accident/injury drug testing. RACC continues to back legislation that would support an employer's right to apply and enforce zero-tolerance workplace drug and alcohol policies. RACC has long-standing opposition to any legislation that would weaken or undermine the Oregon Supreme Court's decision in *Emerald Steel v. BOLI* or any attempt to circumvent federal marijuana laws burdening employers and/or putting Oregon employees at greater risk.

RACC opposes any legislation that would expand employer liability through new and/or expanded protected classes, including but not limited to family caregivers, RACC would support legislation protecting confidential investigation materials in personnel files from inspection by employee.

RACC would oppose any new proposed state minimum wage increases. The previous increase passed in Oregon's 2016 legislative session continues to be burdensome to rural Oregon employers and adverse to job creation. RACC will continue to advocate for remedies, especially for rural Oregon communities. RACC continues to support creation of a youth employment plan for 16-18 year olds or a "training stipend," among other potential proposals.

RACC opposes legislation that would expand prevailing wage law, especially to private construction, because of potential damage to the economy and job creation.

RACC supports legislation that would limit liability for penalty wages when there is a dispute over wages due after an employee leaves employment. RACC opposes rulemaking, regulatory action or legislation that undercuts the principle that employers should not be liable for employee misconduct (*OSHA v. CC&L Roofing*).

RACC opposes any proposed legislation or regulation, including card check systems, that would limit ability of workers to vote in a secret ballot union election. RACC opposes any expansion of employee rights to use employer resources for purposes of organizing or other union-related activity and opposes allowing striking workers to use UI benefits, unless they meet other UI eligibility requirements.

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- *Transportation Infrastructure Funding*

RACC will consider and support proposals that increase state funding allocations for road infrastructure, as there is a significant funding gap for road infrastructure needs across the state. RACC will support and aggressively advocate for funding for current and future transportation and related infrastructure projects deemed important to business and commerce. Support for transportation package funding is contingent upon sunset of low carbon fuel standards. RACC would support legislation reforming ODOT's permitting procedures for access to state highways.

As the 2025 Oregon Legislature is expected to consider a transportation package, there will be a wide range of proposals most anticipated to negatively impact business. RACC will advocate as above-referenced and for previously approved project lists, including essential maintenance; equitable cost allocation for users of the system and requiring accountability, transparency and efficiency from ODOT to ensure funds are used as intended.

RACC will support and advocate for infrastructure investments/improvements to facilitate port access, specifically the Port of Coos Bay, to enhance access to national and global markets.

RACC will oppose regulations from state agencies or other provisions that unnecessarily increase the cost of transportation projects.

RACC will advocate for new or enhanced revenue mechanisms for bicycle/pedestrian projects generated from users of bike/pedi infrastructure, rather than utilizing revenue from highway users, which reduces road projects' funding.

- *Workforce/Workforce Development*

RACC will support initiatives that positively influence the quality of our workforce. These include initiatives to retrain dislocated and existing workers to improve job skills; fund local business and industry seeking to expand workforce through training; programs focused on preparing youth for the workforce with marketable skills that employers find desirable (including "soft skills"); identifying current and future needs of local business community and supporting a state and local workforce development system (including K-12 and higher ed) that meets those needs. RACC supports legislation targeting workforce investments in high-demand areas that generate higher-wage career opportunities vital to economic development, such as manufacturing.

RACC will continue to advance its position of prioritizing the stabilization of K-12 funding.

RACC supports easing certification path and reducing barriers that hinder expanding childcare options in Oregon.

RACC supports legislation that ensures oversight of Student Success Act (SSA) expenditures and which holds the Oregon Department of Education and school districts accountable to stated goals and outcomes.

RACC will advocate for a review of the state's current workforce development structure, and support a redesign away from the current policy of multiple agencies and offices responsible for siloed pieces of the workforce puzzle.

RACC supports legislation that incentivizes development and/or streamlines permitting processes for new home construction to alleviate Oregon's workforce housing shortage.

- *Environment/Energy*

RACC would oppose legislation creating new layers of approvals/permitting with state EIS program and any legislation increasing maximum penalties imposed by Oregon DEQ. RACC would oppose legislation authorizing DEQ's further adoption of severe carbon intensity standards and/or legislation linking the state's procurement of goods and services to greenhouse gas production of materials, transportation and manufacturing. RACC would oppose any unnecessary air emission mandates and oppose any proposed emissions-free legislation.

RACC supports consistent and uniform state application of delegated air, water, cleanup and energy regulatory permitting authority. RACC will oppose new, expanded or duplicative regulatory overlays at the local level. RACC opposes new, expanded or duplicative state regulation for federally-implemented programs.

RACC opposes fee increases that are not accompanied by proportional increases in non-fee funding; opposes fees not reasonably tied to environmental benefits; and, opposes the addition of local fees that impose unreasonable cost burdens or duplicative fee structures.

RACC opposes the imposition of new layers of regulatory oversight or permitting, including a state environmental impact statement (EIS) program.

- *Transient Lodging Tax Law*

RACC will oppose any attempt to repeal or change the state of Oregon's 2003 Transient Lodging Tax law, or legislation that would lessen percentages of TLT funds dedicated to visitor services and tourism promotion.

- *Retail Business*

The RACC will support and advocate for legislation that supports retail businesses relating to retail crime. Retail crime has skyrocketed in recent years, increasing public safety concerns in addition to increased cost to businesses and consumers. Retail crime includes, but is not limited to, shoplifting, burglary, abuse of retail workers (employees), vandalism/property damage, online scams, and money, checkout and refund fraud.

RACC opposes any proposals for new regulations and taxes that increase the burden on retailers.

RACC opposes legislation that bans certain products, packaging or types of retailers.

RACC supports legislation that would increase penalties for individuals and entities who manufacture and/or sell counterfeit merchandise to consumers.

RACC will oppose proposed legislation that has the intent or effect of controlling prices.

RACC supports customer loyalty programs.

RACC opposes proposals that require retailers to report on the type and amount of sale of certain products, particularly pesticides.

RACC supports increased penalties for shoplifting and other retail crime.

RACC will monitor and advocate, as needed, on the efforts by the new Organized Retail Crime Task Force.

2025-2026 Public Affairs & Legislative Agenda

- *Manufacturing*
RACC will advocate for policy changes that benefit all manufacturers, rather than cherry-picking “favorite” industries.
- *Tax Reform/State Budget Priorities/Fiscal Responsibility/Government Efficiency*
RACC supports comprehensive tax reform. Any tax reform proposal must promote private-sector job creation.

The chamber continues to oppose any legislation proposing taxes and fees that unfairly targets Oregon business, specifically but, not limited to further taxing on GROSS sales. RACC supports legislation reducing personal income tax rates applied to capital gains; business tax credits that promote economic development and job creation.

RACC opposes any proposed increases to the corporate activity tax (CAT). RACC supports any efforts to address its adverse impacts to business, including but not limited to expanding exceptions to the CAT obligation.

RACC opposes any temporary or permanent business tax increase.

RACC opposes any effort to change Oregon’s tax structure that disrupts the balance between business property owners and personal property owners.

RACC supports PERS reform legislation that is fair, equitable and sustainable for all Oregonians, and that reduces costs to public employers.

The use of taxes should be fair and equitable in providing services and programs that benefit economic growth and the health and welfare of citizens. The RACC will support incentives to encourage government mergers and consolidations at all levels; eliminating duplication of services and performance audits to determine the effectiveness of programs. Spending decisions must be prioritized in order for sustainable tax relief. Key assets for economic growth, such as funding for roads and workforce education and training should be maintained and even enhanced where private sector economic activity will be bolstered. Decision-making processes and policies should consider impact on private-sector job creation or private-sector job elimination.

RACC supports new tax credits and incentives for economic development and business investment, including but not limited to incentives for construction of much-needed housing to meet workforce housing demands.

RACC supports maintenance of existing business tax credits. RACC continues to oppose gross receipts tax on Oregon corporations. RACC would oppose corporate tax disclosure mandates. RACC supports the three-fifths (3/5) supermajority voting requirement for revenue raising legislation.

- *Campaign Finance*
The new campaign finance limits and regulations go into effect in 2027. RACC will monitor implementation of the new system (HB 2024 which passed in 2024) to ensure the compromise that led to the passage of the legislation is fully honored. RACC will oppose any attempts to expand campaign finance limits that would adversely impact or restrict chambers, business organizations and businesses ability to advocate.

- *Misc. Business*

RACC will continue to oppose any legislation that would in any way weaken the financial position of SAIF or reduces its ability to fulfill its statutory mission to make workers' compensation insurance available to as many Oregon employers as possible.

RACC supports proposals that protect business' intellectual property and proprietary information.

- *Education Funding*

RACC will continue to support educational programs and proposals (K-12 and higher education) that will train the workforce to meet the current and future needs of our area's private sector. RACC will continue to advocate for stable and secure funding of Oregon's education system, believing PERS reform and/or efficient management of PERS is imperative to the future stabilization of adequate funding. RACC supports reinstatement and expansion of high school career tech education and "trades" programs.

RACC opposes any proposal or effort to raid SAIF reserves (or any other dedicated reserves) to attempt to address any shortfalls in Oregon's Public Employee Retirement System (PERS).

- *Health Care*

The chamber would oppose legislation that would increase cost shift from public programs to private payers in order to cover any potential budget shortfall for the state of Oregon's Medicaid programs; legislation that would in any way change the way public employee health benefits are provided if it leads to additional cost shifting; or, any legislation proposing additional health care mandates not based on medical necessity.

RACC opposes any proposal that would impose a tax, fee or other revenue generator on targets businesses or individuals to fund changes to Oregon's health care delivery or insurance systems (Universal Health Plan/Oregon Health Plan).

RACC supports policies and initiatives that address health care coverage of the underinsured and uninsured without penalizing or shifting costs to employers. RACC opposes any efforts that may raise the cost of insurance, prescription drugs or other necessary health care.

RACC supports the protection of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, known as ERISA, as designated by the United States Congress.

- *Permitting/Agency*

To ease Oregon's overly burdensome permitting rules and lengthy processes, RACC would support changes that require state agencies to review permit requirements at the time of application. RACC also supports changes that would prohibit state agencies from surprising applicants with new requirements in the middle of the permitting process. RACC supports legislation that requires agencies to respond within certain time periods.

RACC supports efforts to reduce and redirect state agency focus on catching and punishing rule violations rather than investing in tools that would improve compliance. RACC advocates for legislation that requires agencies to provide plain language and assistance with compliance.

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- *Legal*

RACC will oppose “prevailing *plaintiff* attorney fee” provisions, as such provisions create an incentive for the filing of frivolous lawsuits.

RACC opposes legislation that would retroactively invalidate existing contracts or certain provisions in existing contracts.

RACC opposes legislation that would require a business to disclose trade secrets.

RACC opposes legislation or any other effort to expand liability by rule.

RACC opposes any effort to erode existing safe harbor laws.

RACC opposes any legislation that has the intent or effect of exposing businesses to new avenues of civil liability.

RACC opposes the expansion of employer liability through new and expanded protected classes and activities.

RACC supports legislative or initiative efforts to reduce and cap punitive damages in medical malpractice and product liability litigation.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE & PUBLIC AFFAIRS ISSUES

Through its professional staff with the support of its Government Affairs Team, the RACC will promote and enhance mutually beneficial relations among its members, the business community, regional and statewide partners and the Oregon Congressional Delegation in order to successfully advocate on behalf of the following:

- *Natural Resources/Forest Management and Timber Harvest*

RACC will continue to advocate for effective forest management to include timber harvest on federal land. RACC will work with local, state and federal officials and entities, business and timber-industry leaders, as federal payments will diminish and ultimately cease, the need for proper forest management that allows for harvest is imperative to the economic growth and sustainability of our community. RACC will join community partners, local government and state officials in support of effective forest management to ensure increased harvest for economic health.

Additionally, RACC will continue to support local efforts to effect changes in federal administrative rules to require prompt assessment, fuels reduction and restoration of forests on federal lands after a fire or other catastrophic event. The RACC will oppose proposed federal legislation or administrative rules adversely affecting the development and growth potential of a biomass energy industry.

RACC will continue to voice its opposition to the USDA Forest Service's Northwest Forest Plan-Area Land Management Plans. RACC will also continue to oppose and question the legality of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument designation, or any such designation, related to the inclusion of O&C forest land in the designation.

- *Transportation Infrastructure / Highway Trust Fund*

To facilitate the development and funding of critical transportation infrastructure priorities, RACC will promote partnerships among its members and the business community, local governments and ODOT. RACC will join chambers and business organizations across the country with the US Chamber of Commerce in support of long-term funding for the Highway Trust Fund and much needed funding investments in a variety of infrastructure projects and programs.

RACC asserts that our nation and state's transportation system is still in need of significant and long-term investment. RACC would support passage of small, phased-in increases of the federal gas tax, during a time when gas prices are relatively low. It is a good investment for business and citizens. However, RACC expects any increase would come with guarantees that the dollars would be invested wisely, for the intended purposes and on genuine transportation projects. RACC also supports permit streamlining of transportation projects for more timely and cost-effective projects.

- *Small Business*

RACC supports small business input in the federal rulemaking process, which has included supporting the Regulatory Flexible Act (RFA) reform. The RFA (passed in 1980) sought to correct a disproportionate burden on small businesses by encouraging federal regulatory agencies to transparently consider the impact of new mandates on small businesses and to minimize negative impacts without compromising the underlying regulatory objectives. Unfortunately, loopholes in the RFA allow federal regulators to bypass the law's requirements and misrepresent the costs of new mandates on small businesses because (a) transparency requirements only apply to businesses directly regulated and (b) judges may not punish agencies for ignoring small business concerns. RACC will continue to urge Congress to prioritize legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the Regulatory Flexibility Act. Related to this position, RACC supports HR 7198 "The Prove It Act of 2024," or any similar proposed legislation that would help protect small businesses from the harm of excessive federal regulations.

- *Card Check (proposed as "The Employee Free Choice Act")*

RACC previously opposed the Employee Free Choice Act as it would eliminate the secret ballot used to determine if unions will represent employees in the workplace and could expose employees to coercion and intimidation. One-sided increases conflict with any sense of fairness or balance. The RACC has no position on whether unions are of benefit to employees or not; that decision is up to employees. RACC continues to support "right to work" legislation. While it is not an anticipated issue for 2025-26 on the federal level, the chamber's position remains.

- *Health Care*

As we continue to face the challenge of rising health care costs, RACC promotes effective private sector solutions and would support reforms needed to achieve lower costs, high-quality care and better health for our citizens. RACC would oppose increased financial burdens on private-sector business to fund federally-mandated health care proposals.

2025-2026 Public Affairs & Legislative Agenda

- *Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im)*
RACC has long-standing support for long-term reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. The reauthorization of Ex-Im Bank was signed into law by President Obama in December 2015 and President Trump in 2019. The bank is reauthorized until December 31, 2026. RACC will support future reauthorization.
- *Immigration Reform*
RACC would support sensible, comprehensive federal immigration reform that 1) reforms the visa system for low and high-skilled workers, 2) creates a mandatory national worker verification system, 3) creates a path to legalization for the over 11 million undocumented workers currently in the U.S. and 4) secures the borders. RACC believes passage of such legislation is necessary to give the United States and U.S. businesses an immigration system necessary to remain competitive in the global economy. Our current immigration system is not serving the interests of our economy, our businesses, our workers or our security.
- *Taxes*
RACC would support comprehensive tax reform that would result in attracting investment, encourage innovation, foster economic growth and job creation and increase private-sector competitiveness in both national and international markets.

RACC advocates for Congress and the administration to pursue a pro-growth agenda and prevent tax increases on American families and businesses. In 2017, pro-growth tax reforms were enacted to invigorate our economy, bringing significant benefits to families and local businesses nationwide. These changes sparked new companies, fueled pay raises for workers, and opened job opportunities as employers reinvested in their communities. Without decisive action from the next Congress and administration, many of the pro-growth tax reforms enacted in 2017 will automatically vanish at the end of 2025.

- *Legal & Regulatory Reform / Permit Streamlining*
RACC will continue long-time advocating for permit streamlining from transportation projects to domestic manufacturing.

RACC opposes increased federal mandates related to greenhouse gas emissions or new federal legislation on climate change.

Legal reform should include raising public awareness of the impact of lawsuit abuse on our economy; reform of the medical malpractice tort system to keep health care costs down; frivolous environmental litigation and, class action tort reform to lessen Class Action Fairness Act.



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