MBR
MASSACHUSETTS BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Public Policy Priorities - 2014

In December, the MBR Board of Directors approved the following public policy priorities for the 2013 – 2014 legislative session:

I. Cost Competitiveness
- Health Care Reform Law Implementation
- Fiscal Policy

II. Public Investment Strategy
- Workforce Development/STEM
- Transportation
- Housing

Within those categories, MBR will focus on the following in 2014:

Health Care Reform Legislation. In 2011, MBR's Health Care Task Force developed a "Framework for Cost Containment," a set of principles that guided our involvement in the creation of the state's cost containment legislation, Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012. With that law now being implemented, the *Health Care Task Force* will develop a new set of principles to inform our advocacy around the implementation of that law that builds upon the framework established in 2011.

- *2014 Deliverable: Develop "Principles for the Implementation of Payment Reform" document.*
- *Completed March, 2014. Disseminated widely to policy makers; continues to inform MBR's advocacy on health care issues.*

Fiscal Policy. The 2014 legislative session, as well as initiative petitions that appear headed to the 2014 ballot, include many issues of importance to MBR and the state's business climate, including: an increase in the minimum wage; earned sick leave; unemployment insurance reform; nurse staffing ratios; and the elimination of indexing the gasoline tax to inflation. The Tax Fairness Commission also will issue its final report. All of these could impact MBR's membership and the state's business climate. MBR, through the *Competitiveness Task Force*, will continue to gather information from the membership to further define and update our positions on these issues, as well as develop the framework for a state economic development strategy that will drive our advocacy as well as inform candidates for public office.

- *2014 Deliverable: Develop framework for economic competitiveness and update MBR's Competitiveness Agenda*

- ***Completed April, 2014. Disseminated widely to policy makers; continues to inform MBR's competitiveness agenda and strategic framework.***

Workforce Development/STEM. MBR's *Education and Workforce Development Task Force* identified a series of priorities for 2014 including continued leadership on the state's STEM agenda, implementation of the new statewide STEM Plan and codification of the STEM initiative. MBR will also work with MassCAN, an initiative to expose all students in Massachusetts to computer science; develop a shared education agenda within the business community; continue to push for a coordinated, collaborative workforce development system that is aligned with the needs of industry; and, promote early childhood education with a focus on its link with STEM.

- *2014 Deliverables:*

- *Codify the state's STEM agenda. **Completed July, 2014.***

- *Incorporate computer science more intentionally in the state STEM agenda. **Completed August, 2014.***

- *Complete survey of business leaders and develop a shared set of education policy priorities for the business community. **Completed March, 2014.***

- *Continued advocacy for early childhood education and aligning the education and workforce development systems with industry needs through participation in a variety of appointed positions. **Ongoing.***

Interconnected Investment Growth Strategy. MBR's Board of Directors identified the relationship between transportation, housing, and workforce policy as an area for additional review. MBR will bring the lens of the interconnectedness of these policy areas to our advocacy for pro-growth public policy. We have engaged with a team of researchers from the University of Massachusetts Boston, who are conducting in-depth interviews with Roundtable members, public officials and other stakeholders to explore this issue further and issue a report.

- *2014 Deliverable: Issue a report on the interconnectedness between housing, transportation and workforce development public policy.*

- ***Report completed, to be issued in the Fall of 2014.***