



## Haywood County Chamber of Commerce 2022-2023 Legislative Priorities

The Haywood County Chamber of Commerce develops and promotes policy positions on critical issues that impact the business community. Annually, community leaders and stakeholders convene to prepare a legislative agenda on both the county and state levels. Below is our stance on our economy's pressing issues.

**Business Environment:** The Haywood County Chamber of Commerce supports policies that provide resources for workforce families and allow our community to develop and maintain a diverse mix of housing types to fill the housing needs of a workforce of all ages and socioeconomic status.

- Fund programs serving and supplying workforce housing and provide incentives to convert short-term rentals to long-term options for workforce housing to attract or maintain the workforce.
- Provide incentives to create availability of workforce rental properties
- Restructure the Economic Incentive Tier system and fund a Site Development grant or loan system for localities to get economic development sites ready for market and identify cluster areas
- Expand affordable access to quality childcare and pre-K education and continued investment in compensation for educational personnel from pre-K through higher education for Western North Carolina's workforce

**Healthcare:** The Haywood County Chamber of Commerce supports policies that support the physical and mental health of residents.

- Reduce barriers to affordable health insurance and increase access to healthcare for NC's working families through the expansion of Medicaid
- Create and expand regional facilities for drug addiction and mental health treatment

**Education and Workforce Training:** The Haywood County Chamber of Commerce supports policies that provide our students with a safe learning environment and access to educational and vocational opportunities.

- Increase funding and programming for local community colleges and universities to continue quality academic and workforce training and communicate vocational opportunities available to high school and adult students.
  - Include employers
  - Create earlier exposure for students
  - Educate parents about the variety of vocational opportunities
- Create safer schools by funding for expansion of school resource officers

**Transportation and Infrastructure:** The Haywood County Chamber of Commerce supports policies that increase our region's competitiveness and quality of life through the modernization and maintenance of infrastructure, including tourism, transportation, and broadband.

- Advocate on the state level for infrastructure support (NCDOT)
- Support increased funding for regional transportation through local agencies
- 2%+ occupancy tax to create a tourism infrastructure fund
- Intermodal transportation/Greenways/Recreation - Support increased funding for transportation, infrastructure, and alternative transportation to support the expansion of the Greenway and recreation offerings in the county.