



*Promoting Business for Over 60 Years*

## **FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

**Immigration:** Common sense immigration reform would boost economic growth, create jobs, and spur innovation and entrepreneurship. And it would renew America's legacy of being an open and welcoming country where anyone who works hard can achieve his or her dreams. Though there may be several different approaches to fix our system, meaningful and lasting reform can only be achieved through bipartisan legislation.

- Require e-verify for all employees and enforce sanctions for companies hiring unauthorized workers
- Increase H1.b visas to a maximum of 200,000 per year and provide a path to permanent residence for visa holders
- Increase visas for unskilled workers including agricultural, food processing and hospitality workers to levels that meet demand and enforce sanctions against employers who hire unauthorized workers

**Education and Workforce:** A strong education system is crucial to preparing people for good jobs and bright futures and sustaining a 21st century workforce that can compete in the global economy. The Federal Government must make changes in education so that

- Students emerge from our public education system prepared for college or a career
- Higher education is more accessible and affordable
- Employers can find workers with the right skills and qualifications
- Our workforce will attract investment, drive growth, and spur innovation

**Health Care:** U.S. health care is the envy of the world—it has helped many individuals live longer than ever and enjoy a better quality of life than previously possible. However, we continue to face the challenge of making quality health care more affordable, more accessible, and more reliable for all Americans.

The Hurst Eules Bedford Chamber of Commerce is focused on promoting effective private sector solutions to our health care challenges that will help control costs, expand access, and improve the quality of care.

We support Federal rules allowing association health plans (AHP's), such as the United Healthcare plan for the North Texas Employer Health Plan Cooperative that several of the chambers in our region is associated. This type of private sector solution allows our small

businesses to have the benefit of large corporate plans to provide our region's employees to have greater options for quality health care paid for by the private sector.

**Infrastructure:** Most Americans agree that our roads, bridges, mass transit systems, air and sea ports, and water infrastructure are critical national assets that drive growth, jobs, safety, and global competitiveness. The Hurst Eules Bedford Chamber of Commerce believes that necessary maintenance of our infrastructure has been neglected and needs investment. Infrastructure is not a problem, it is an opportunity for bipartisan agreement to invest wisely and carefully in our most critical needs, while eliminating wasteful spending. Every year we delay necessary maintenance and improvements the situation become more critical and the costs increased.

**International Trade and Investment:** Selling more of our goods and services around the world is crucial to creating American jobs, helping small businesses, and keeping the United States ahead of its global competitors.

- The size of our economy necessarily leads to trade imbalance with other countries.
- The US should negotiate trade and investment agreements that are fair, create a level playing field and put American families and workers first.
- The USMTA should be passed by Congress and implemented immediately
- The use of tariffs and trade barriers as a weapon hurts American consumers and businesses and should be discontinued.

**Travel and Tourism:** The United States should maximize efforts to welcome tourists and business travelers to our country and promote American tourist opportunities around the world.

*Adopted by the HEB Chamber Board of Directors September 11, 2019*