



CEDAR VALLEY 2025 LEGISLATIVE POLICY AGENDA

Economic Growth for the Cedar Valley and for Iowa is our priority

Grow Cedar Valley advocates for smart pro-business policies on a continuous basis that support our priority of economic growth for the Cedar Valley and for Iowa. During the 2025 session of the Iowa Legislature, we believe the focus for the area's business growth is continued emphasis on talent attraction. The slow growth in Iowa's population has placed overwhelming pressure on our businesses as they struggle to find qualified candidates, with appropriate skills, who are ready to work. As we approach the 2025 session, Grow Cedar Valley believes workforce training programs are extremely important and they should be coupled with a focus on retaining talent, attracting new Iowans from other states and developing the next generation to ensure future economic growth. We urge policy makers to make decisions promoting Iowa's lower cost of living, community cohesiveness and the safety of our towns and cities as these are attributes people rank highly in their decisions to come to or stay in Iowa. We also call for attention to education, economic development, and other areas.

Talent

Grow Cedar Valley supports developing policy strategies to grow Iowa's population and workforce that:

- Ensure state workforce and economic development programs have the ability to address the most pressing employee needs like child-care, transportation and housing.
- Incentivize and develop opportunities for former Iowans to return.
- Retain more Iowans from our community colleges, private colleges and universities, and provide the Regents institutions with tools to encourage their graduates to become lifelong Iowans.
- Address disparities within public support systems to avoid "cliff effects" that act as disincentives for potential employees.
- Build on successful state funded programs that help create quality of life amenities that help draw workforce to Iowa, with a focus on enhancement of natural resources, tourism and "next-level" sports facilities that draw larger events and crowds to the Cedar Valley.
- Continue to make Iowa a welcoming environment that is inclusive of a broad diversity of people.
- Reintegrate Iowans into the work force who deserve a second chance.
- Attract new Americans by pushing for a uniform immigration system across all states to vet international talent and policies provide support for new Americans to Iowa who arrive.
- Highlight programs and training opportunities such as the Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program (260E) and the Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F), and Iowa's Registered Apprenticeship Programs to offer direct access to skilled training for employers.

Education

Grow Cedar Valley has shown strong and consistent interest in and support of education. GCV will demonstrate that backing by advocating for:

- Support for education at all levels from pre-school through post-high school options.
- Support the University of Northern Iowa appropriations request for tuition support to recruit students from contiguous states and build the future Iowa workforce.
- Increase funding and continued efforts to improve dedicated workforce training and work-based learning programs at Hawkeye Community College and in our K-12 schools to keep up with demand from businesses.

Economic Development

Grow Cedar Valley believes the use of economic development incentives are essential to our area's and the state's success. These tools must grow capital investment, increase wages and achieve quality job creation. GCV supports economic development initiatives that:

- Concentrate on expanding markets in which the state is already a recognized leader (e.g. advanced manufacturing, bioscience and financial and insurance sectors).
- Provide continued economic development appropriations support for UNI Business and Community Services programs.
- Ensure the sustainability of tax increment financing (TIF) and abatements for use by our local governments that facilitate expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of diverse new businesses.
- Encourage legislative review of existing credits and incentives to prioritize those programs with the most impact and redistribute funds to those programs that attract economic development projects to the state.
- Maintain important economic development tools, such as the research activities credits, high quality jobs credits, workforce housing tax credits, and historic preservation credits, as well as brownfields/grayfields tax credits and other DNR programming and incentives that help redevelopment of infill sites.

Complementary GCV priorities for 2025

Grow Cedar Valley will pursue several priorities during the 2025 Legislative Session that are complementary to the goal of seeing growth in the economy of our region and the state in an inclusive and beneficial way with specific attention to the following:

- Improvement of Iowa's general business climate through tax code improvements, sensible regulatory structures, controlling business cost drivers and making myriad infrastructure investments to ensure a policy environment that spurs business growth.
- Creation of a broad-based group to examine property taxes and their impact on businesses, local governments, economic development and individuals in Iowa.
- Effective long-term infrastructure planning and examination of innovative funding mechanisms and delivery methods, such as public-private partnerships and alternative project delivery methods, that protect taxpayers and make the necessary resources available for the significant capital investments required.
- Alignment of local infrastructure needs with federal infrastructure initiatives to position the Cedar Valley to capitalize on such opportunities.
- Supporting efforts to eliminate scam calls and messages and provide resources to check the legitimacy of a contact.
- Recognition of increasing problems with securing property and casualty insurance as well as certain personal lines, particularly homeowners' and personal auto insurance.