The Hampton Roads Chamber means business. Our members' business needs are our primary focus, and we will strive to meet those needs through our advocacy efforts. During the 2019 legislative session, the Chamber’s efforts at the state level will reflect the following core values: strengthening and diversifying our regional economy; enhancing our state’s “business friendly” climate; reducing over regulation and taxation of business; reshaping education & workforce development; improving health care access and managing health care costs; investing in transportation infrastructure; energy and technology; and supporting initiatives that protect and grow Virginia based military and federal assets.

The Hampton Roads Chamber is an impactful advocate, powerful economic partner, inspiring ignitor and a regional collaborator working for you.

2019 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

BRYAN K. STEPHENS
President & CEO

BUSINESS CLIMATE

The Hampton Roads Chamber takes an active role in advocating for fair business taxes and tax incentives to encourage small, medium and large business growth, stimulate hiring and increase revenues that help bolster economic development.

• Regional, collaborative economic development initiatives that help to enhance and diversify Virginia’s economy
• Reduction of regulatory burdens for businesses
• Changes that will modernize Virginia’s tax structure
• Efforts to elevate recurrent flooding as a regional and statewide issue
• Virginia’s Right to Work laws for private and public employees

TOURISM & FILM

Tourism is an instant revenue generator for Virginia and is the fifth largest employer. Virginia reached $25 billion in tourism revenues in 2017 which is a 4.4% increase from 2016. Tourism supported 232,000 jobs in 2017, a year over year increase of 1.1%.

• Post Labor Day start to schools or school calendar legislation that considers the impact on Virginia’s tourism industry.
• Efforts to promote sports and tourism

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Hampton Roads Chamber is supportive of a broad coalition of public and private sector interests to urge the legislature to increase K-12 funding for education.

• Strengthen the linkage between the classroom and the workplace at all levels with collaboration of both the public and private sectors
• Initiatives designed to prepare students for careers in STEM-H (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health care)
• Strengthening vocational training opportunities including apprenticeships starting at High School level

ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES

The Hampton Roads Chamber supports efforts to develop and sustain safe, reliable, and efficient cost-effective sources of energy in order to maintain a viable business environment and robust economy in Virginia.

• Offshore Wind energy development
• Uniform regulation to reduce local barriers
HEALTH CARE

The Hampton Roads Chamber seeks to inform and promote solutions that decrease cost, expand access, and increase the quality of health care for Virginia's business community.

• Policies that help businesses provide affordable coverage for their employees

• Certificate of Need Program / COPN Reform

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

The Hampton Roads Chamber supports technology-based industries which create tremendous growth and opportunity and are essential to competing in an interconnected world.

• Policies to encourage private sector investment leading to universal access to broadband communication through the use of all available technologies, including wireless, fiber optics and cable

• Expansion of business opportunities in conjunction with the completion of the Trans-Atlantic Data Cables landing in Virginia Beach

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The Hampton Roads Chamber supports a balanced investment in the Commonwealth's transportation system that ensures the efficient and effective development of all modes of transportation infrastructure, reduces congestion, and enhances the mobility of goods.

• HRTPO and HRTAC long-range transportation plan

• Port of Virginia growth and development/multi-modal systems

• Intercity and higher speed rail

• Funding to expand Norfolk Airport runways and facilities

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Hampton Roads Chamber supports strategic initiatives to preserve and grow military and federal assets.

• Veteran job transition and training programs focused on reducing the skills gaps in Hampton Roads

• Workforce development efforts for veterans, including recognition of military work history to obtain civilian credentials

Visit the Advocacy page at www.hamptonroadschamber.com to view the full report and follow legislative updates.