

Connecticut has long been known as a leader by many economic measures, but we face critical challenges.



The state's chronic fiscal instability shakes business confidence and hinders investment; Connecticut trails most other states in growing our economy and jobs; and Connecticut is losing wealth and many educated people to other states.

Below are CBIA's policy objectives for reversing these negative trends.

On the back are recommendations to begin to achieve those objectives in 2017.

## You Have the Power to Fix Connecticut

### Regulatory Reform

Create systems to ensure regulations minimize costs to businesses and are adopted only if necessary to achieve the core mission of the sponsoring agency, clearly written, and interpreted reasonably and consistently.

### Labor & Employment

Make it easier for businesses to create jobs by making Connecticut's labor laws and regulations more consistent with federal requirements and removing excessive administrative and legal burdens on employers.

### Environment

Create a new culture of partnership and collaboration between state regulators and the business community to ensure a clean environment and a growing economy.

### Energy

Create a competitive energy future with diverse fuel sources, lower energy costs, superior infrastructure, and advanced technologies.

## Sustainable State Spending & Tax Policy

Restore fiscal stability and expand economic growth and business confidence by reforming state government, reducing the cost of services, stabilizing long-term state finances, and adopting tax policies that encourage private-sector investment.

### Education & Workforce Development

Strengthen the talent pipeline to provide more opportunities for residents and meet the skilled workforce needs of the state's employers.

### Transportation

Dedicate public and private resources to priority projects that will ease congestion and improve infrastructure connectivity.

### Healthcare

Shape healthcare policy using innovative best practices that reduce costs and increase quality and access.

One of the most important things lawmakers can do in 2017 is promote economic growth and fiscal stability. For starters, that means not proposing bills that add more labor or other workplace mandates that would increase the high costs and heavy regulatory burdens our businesses already face.



For more information on any of the issues below, visit [bit.ly/GAteam](http://bit.ly/GAteam).

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## First Steps for 2017

<p><b>Sustainable State Spending &amp; Tax Policy</b></p>	<p>Enact the state's original spending cap to ensure responsible spending decisions.</p>	<p>Pass a two-year operating budget without tax or fee increases, borrowing, or tapping into the Rainy Day Fund.</p>	<p>Continue to reform corrections, rebalance long-term care services, make state agency operations lean, and use nonprofits to deliver state services cost-effectively.</p>	<p>Negotiate public-sector wages, pensions, and health benefits to make them more consistent with other Northeastern states' and address unfunded liabilities.</p>	<p>Modernize tax incentives by permitting certain businesses to earn tax credits that encourage innovation and productivity and apply them to the personal income tax, starting with the Manufacturers' Apprenticeship Tax Credit.</p>	<p>Implement the scheduled phase-back of the R&amp;D tax credit, permit companies to redeploy earned tax credits, and maintain existing tax incentives, upon which investment decisions are based.</p>
<p><b>Education &amp; Workforce Development</b></p>	<p>Continue to implement adopted education reforms, particularly those that use metrics to measure outcomes, while being strategic about the fiscal impact.</p>		<p>Support workforce development programs that address the skills gap and align with the needs of Connecticut's leading and emerging industries.</p>			
<p><b>Energy</b></p>	<p>Adopt legislation that promotes cost-effective, reliable, in-state production and transmission of energy from diverse fuel sources as well as greater access to regional sources of low and zero emission electricity.</p>		<p>Reject proposals that would place greater responsibility on Connecticut (over other Northeastern states) for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>			
<p><b>Environment</b></p>	<p>Eliminate regulations that create resource burdens for regulators and businesses without demonstrable environmental benefit.</p>	<p>Require staff interpretations of environmental regulations be documented and easily available to the public.</p>	<p>Create an efficient process that keeps state environmental regulations up-to-date as related federal rules change.</p>			
<p><b>Healthcare</b></p>	<p>Support existing state initiatives, including aspects of the State Innovation Model and the State Health Improvement Plan.</p>	<p>Establish a procedure that supports substantive information gathering prior to passage of any new health benefit mandate.</p>	<p>Reject tax and fee increases and other cost-shifting practices that drive up the cost of health coverage.</p>	<p>Continue to expand Connecticut's health data sector.</p>		
<p><b>Labor &amp; Employment</b></p>	<p>Make state wage and hour laws and regulations more consistent with federal requirements.</p>	<p>Require CHRO to adopt the federal standards that would eliminate meritless claims and reduce the backlog of cases.</p>	<p>Promote the solvency of the unemployment compensation trust fund for future workers through benefit reform.</p>	<p>Streamline the filing of workers' compensation claims for employer notification purposes.</p>	<p>Limit permanent partial disability awards to what is related to the work injury.</p>	
<p><b>Regulatory Reform</b></p>	<p>Adopt legislation to provide state agencies with the authority to waive administrative fines and penalties for minor, first-time violations corrected within a reasonable period of time.</p>		<p>Adopt legislation requiring agencies to provide a plain-language summary of final regulations, including applicability triggers and compliance requirements.</p>			
<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	<p>Use the special transportation fund exclusively for transportation purposes by adopting an enforceable transportation lockbox.</p>	<p>Use the private sector to expedite planning and completion of priority projects.</p>	<p>Address congestion by improving our state's highways and mass transit systems.</p>	<p>Increase connectivity between our state's air, rail, and port resources.</p>		