2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA
DANVILLE PITTSYLVANIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Danville Pittsylvania Chamber of Commerce represents more than 600 businesses employing approximately 23,000 people in the Dan River Region. The Chamber is the premier advocate for business and industry in the region and projects a unified voice on key issues that affect the business community.

Our Chamber believes that the success for both our region and the Commonwealth depends on investments and priorities that stimulate and advance economic growth and prosperity for businesses **of all sizes.** The Danville Pittsylvania Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests our legislators support the following priorities:

Workforce & Talent Development
Goal: Build a sustainable talent pipeline that meets current and future employer needs.

- **Career Pathways:** Strengthen partnerships between K-12 schools, higher education, and employers to expand internships, apprenticeships, and credential-based learning tied to regional industries.
- **Community College Funding:** Support additional state investment in the Virginia Community College System and FastForward programs to meet high-demand skills in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, IT, and logistics.
- **Childcare Access:** Encourage state incentives and grants that expand affordable childcare options to remove barriers to workforce participation.
- **Workforce Housing:** Advocate for housing development tools and tax credits that make it possible for working families and young professionals to live near employment centers.

Economic & Business Climate
Goal: Ensure a pro-business environment that attracts investment and supports growth.

- **Right to Work:** Support maintaining Virginia's Right to Work status to protect economic development competitiveness.
- **Regulatory Efficiency:** Encourage modernization of state permitting, licensing, and reporting systems to reduce administrative burdens on employers.
- **Small Business Support:** Advocate for state-backed access-to-capital programs and procurement opportunities for small, minority, and women-owned businesses.
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** Support funding and policy tools that grow the innovation ecosystem, including technology transfer, seed funding, and support for emerging sectors.

Infrastructure & Site Readiness
Goal: Strengthen the region's ability to attract and retain business investment.

- **Transportation Investment:** Advocate for improvements to U.S. 29, U.S. 58, U.S. 220 in Martinsville and key connectors supporting the Southern Virginia Megasite.
- **Broadband Expansion:** Support continued investment in broadband infrastructure for full regional coverage, enabling business growth, education, and telehealth.

Infrastructure & Site Readiness, Cont.
Goal: Strengthen the region's ability to attract and retain business investment.

- **Industrial Site Development:** Expand state funding for site readiness to ensure Southern Virginia can compete for large-scale industrial and technology projects.

Education & Workforce Alignment

Goal: Align education with local workforce and economic needs.

- **CTE Modernization:** Increase resources for local Career and Technical Education centers to update equipment and programs aligned with advanced manufacturing, IT, and healthcare.
- **Work-Based Learning:** Support incentives for businesses to host internships, job shadowing, and cooperative education opportunities.
- **STEM & Soft Skills:** Encourage curriculum development that includes both technical and employability skills critical to business success.

Healthcare Access & Affordability

Goal: Improve healthcare access and control costs impacting employers and families.

- **Employer Healthcare Costs:** Support policies that increase competition and transparency in the healthcare marketplace.
- **Behavioral & Mental Health:** Increase local and regional access to behavioral health resources to improve workforce well-being and retention.
- **Rural Health Infrastructure:** Support investment in rural hospital networks and telehealth expansion.

Regional Economic Development

Goal: Strengthen regional competitiveness through collaboration.

- **State Incentives:** Advocate for competitive and flexible incentive programs that reward job creation and investment in rural areas.
- **Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor (BRIC):** Support the funding of a coalition of businesses dedicated to advancing Virginia's fastest-growing region and the Commonwealth's fourth economic engine – from Danville to Martinsville to Roanoke and Blacksburg, and the counties throughout the corridor.
- **Public-Private Collaboration:** Encourage state programs that reward regional partnerships among local governments, chambers, and industry leaders.

Energy & Sustainability

Goal: Ensure reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy for business and community growth.

- **Balanced Energy Portfolio:** Support investment in diverse energy sources, including nuclear, renewables, and natural gas, to ensure energy reliability and affordability.
- **Energy Resilience:** Advocate for grid modernization and infrastructure upgrades to meet industrial and community needs.