

PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

PRIORITY ISSUES

Broadband: Support policies to aggregate demand and develop more accurate service maps, enable service by municipal entities or other market participants, consider use of the Indiana Universal Service Fund for broadband deployment into unserved and underserved areas of the state, better leverage federal funds for state grant programs, and make INDOT right-of-way policies easier.

Workforce Development: IEDA supports policies to enable workforce training dollars to be used for targeted recruiting. The Skills Enhancement Fund should be preserved at IEDC and consideration should be given to a corporate training tax credit.

Regional Development: Continue to encourage regional development with regional development tax credits and data center incentives that help regions breakout in developing economic clusters. Support an appropriation to the Indiana Finance Authority Brownfield Development Fund. Allow recent changes in the TIF statute to work before more changes are contemplated. Extend CREED for one additional year to enable transitioning projects. Allow regional economic develop incentives to occur through interlocal cooperation agreements.

Workforce Housing: Serious consideration should be given to incentives that fill the gap for the production of single-family and multifamily workforce housing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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The Indiana Economic Development Association is the voice and advocate for economic development. Made up of economic developers, utilities, attorneys, consultants, financial institutions, higher education professionals, engineers, architects, and construction professionals, our members are passionately dedicated to advancing Indiana's prosperity by attracting and retaining investment.

GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

IEDA believes that state and local economic development efforts should provide a consistent strategy to encourage private-sector investment that brings higher-than-average wages, high-skill jobs, diversified economic sectors, and robust tax revenue. Economic development policy should meet one or more of these criteria:

Creating Quality Jobs

- An available supply of a diverse and highly skilled workforce is critical to business. New business investment heightens the demands on the labor force, which generally increases wages and benefits across the economy. New jobs should pay above the local average wage or require diverse skills that create higher-paying employment.

Diversifying Indiana Economy

- Attracting new enterprise and expanding/increasing the competitiveness and productivity of existing industries are the principal means for diversifying the economy.

Maintaining a Competitive Environment

- Tax policies, incentives, and government policies/regulations all have an impact on whether a business locates or grows in Indiana. Policies should remove or reduce disadvantages for Indiana vis-à-vis other jurisdictions.

Expanding the Tax Base

- The tax base grows when new plants or facilities are built or expanded, generating taxable activity. Policies should assist companies relocating to and those already in Indiana.

PRIORITY ISSUES

Broadband: One of the greatest challenges Indiana faces is creating and maintaining a world-class telecommunications infrastructure. All sectors of modern business – agriculture, manufacturing, distribution, life sciences, services, and retail – are being dramatically transformed by information technology. Economic developers in rural counties increasingly report that affordable bandwidth is a competitive barrier to recruiting or retaining businesses that would otherwise find rural Indiana an attractive operating location. Affordable, universal access to state-of-the-art broadband communications across the state is critical to creating a level playing field for rural areas to compete with metro areas and attracting investment, providing education, and developing telemedicine.

- *Support policies to aggregate demand and develop more accurate service maps, enable service by municipal entities or other market participants, consider use of the Indiana Universal Service Fund for*

broadband deployment into unserved and underserved areas of the state, better leverage federal funds for state grant programs, and make INDOT right-of-way policies easier.

Workforce Development: Workforce availability and skills are at the top of the list in every business investment decision. Two issues need continued attention: recruiting a qualified workforce and ensuring a steady supply of highly qualified workers to replace those who are retiring. Programs to enhance Indiana companies' ability to recruit veterans and graduates must be developed and scaled up to significantly reduce our state's leading headwind in site selection indexes.

- *IEDA supports policies to enable workforce training dollars to be used for targeted recruiting. The Skills Enhancement Fund should be preserved at IEDC and consideration should be given to a corporate training tax credit.*

Regional Development: Indiana regional economic development efforts are helping select communities come together to transform their regions into nationally-recognized destinations to live, work, and play. With employers continually stressing the need for a large, skilled workforce, Indiana is building upon its strong economic foundation to create a place that attracts and retains future generations of Hoosiers. Transformational change should be promoted in an equitable manner for all rural and urban communities.

- *Continue to encourage regional development with regional development tax credits and data center incentives that help regions breakout in developing economic clusters. Support an appropriation to the Indiana Finance Authority Brownfield Development Fund. Allow recent changes in the TIF statute to work before more changes are contemplated. Extend CREED for one additional year to enable transitioning projects. Allow regional economic development incentives to occur through interlocal cooperation agreements.*

Workforce Housing: Safe and affordable workforce housing is becoming a headwind on Indiana's economic development efforts and deserves priority attention. Most of Indiana's housing was built prior to 1980; its quality, age, and condition are declining and supply is not keeping up with demand. The preferences of millennials also impact the need for a range of workforce housing with access to multiple modes of transportation, education, and amenities, placing more weight on the quality of place.

- *Serious consideration should be given to incentives that fill the gap for the production of single-family and multifamily workforce housing.*