



GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP



2026 FEDERAL POLICY AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is the largest regional business, economic development and talent development organization in Iowa and the second-largest regional chamber of commerce in the country, serving multiple counties in Greater Des Moines.

Together with more than 400 Investors and an Affiliate Chamber of Commerce network of more than 7,200 Regional Chamber Members, The Partnership helps businesses grow and advances quality of life in Greater Des Moines with one voice, one mission and as one region, contributing to a vibrant regional economy.

Through innovation, strategic planning and global collaboration, The Partnership grows opportunity, helps create jobs and promotes the DSM region as the best place to build a business, a career and a future.

PUBLIC POLICY TEAM

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GOVERNMENT POLICY COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

David Stark, Chair; Chief of Government Affairs & Philanthropy, UnityPoint Health

GOVERNMENT POLICY COUNCIL OVERVIEW

The Government Policy Council (GPC), made up of made up of Partnership Investors, Affiliates and Regional Chamber Member organizations, shapes The Partnership's state and federal policy agendas.

* The Partnership's policy team works with Dentons Davis Brown Law Firm for day-to-day lobbying at the Iowa State Capitol throughout the Legislative Session. Policy events exist as an opportunity to connect Partnership Investors and Members with policymakers, staff and issue experts.

Greater Des Moines Partnership

2026 FEDERAL POLICY FEATURED PRIORITIES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

The Partnership supports investment in regional transportation projects that safely and efficiently move goods and people, advance economic growth and support job creation, including the Des Moines Airport Terminal Project, interstate designation of Highway 5/65 and expansion of the Ankeny Regional Airport.

PERMITTING REFORM

The Partnership supports modernizing and improving our nation's permitting process to expedite critical infrastructure projects and promote economic growth.

WORKFORCE FUNDING AND PROGRAMS

Strong workforce impacts every industry and area of the state. The Partnership supports investing in our nation's workforce through the expansion of apprenticeships, accessible childcare and employer incentives to encourage workforce training and upskilling to help retain employees.

HOUSING

The Partnership supports the expansion of housing options through funding and policies that encourage communities and employers to invest in new and existing housing.

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ECONOMIC GROWTH AND BUSINESS CLIMATE

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is the regional economic and community development organization and is focused on policies that impact economic growth and the region's business climate. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- Protecting the gains from tax reform by making permanent key provisions in the tax code, such as:
 - Low rates on pass-through and corporate income.
 - 20% pass-through deduction.
 - Incentives for capital purchases.
- Streamlining the government procurement process and increasing private sector business opportunities in the federal market.
- Reauthorization of the Small Business Administration (SBA) and support for SBA's efforts to provide technical and financial assistance and access to capital for small businesses, including nonprofits.
- The preservation and protection of state-based regulatory standards in the private insurance market whether through legislation or the rule-making process.
- Legislation to allow life insurers' debt investments to receive ordinary tax treatment.
- Tax policies which further support retirement security.
- Maintaining the ability of state and local governments to utilize tax-exempt bonds, re-instituting the ability of state and local governments to advance the refunding of outstanding tax-exempt bonds and opposing elimination or limitations on the exclusion of interest thereon from federal tax.
- Supporting effective technology-transfer frameworks, especially the Bayh-Dole Act, which enables federally funded discoveries to move from the lab to the marketplace.

WORKFORCE

Talent recruitment and retention is a top priority for Partnership Investors, Affiliates and Regional Chamber Members, impacting every industry and area of the state. To that end, The Partnership supports:

- Policies that increase child care access and affordability.
- Increasing workforce funding to support effective digital skills programs and on-the-job training.
- Reauthorization of Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Expansion of apprenticeship support by the Department of Labor.
- Extending the Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit for 10 years and redirecting it to support apprenticeship and other work-based learning.
- Incentives for employers, including nonprofits, to upskill employees and assist with tuition and education loans, along with policies and programs that make post-secondary education more accessible and affordable for all qualified students.
- Removing barriers that prevent people with disabilities from obtaining and maintaining employment.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND HOMELAND SECURITY

The Partnership is dedicated to building our region's strength in trade and as a destination for global investment. Therefore, The Partnership supports the following policy priorities:

- Pro-growth international trade and investment policies and principles.
- Enforcing existing U.S. trade agreements and trade rules, including ensuring full implementation of the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement.
- Making the U.S. tariff code more competitive by enacting a new Miscellaneous Tariff Bill and the Generalized System of Preferences.
- Recommitting to and strengthening relationships with trading partners to reform and modernize international trade rules and institutions, such as the WTO.
- Refraining from imposing tariffs on raw materials and inputs that may weaken Iowa's production competitiveness.
- Promoting and defending robust Intellectual Property (IP) rules globally, while increasing efforts in the U.S. and abroad.
- Addressing the infrastructure needs of the Iowa National Guard to enable their mission.

ENERGY AND UTILITIES

The Partnership supports policies and balanced regulatory practices that ensure energy remains safe, affordable and reliable, while promoting Iowa's renewable energy sources and avoiding directives or cross subsidies. Specifically, this includes:

- Permitting reform and increased coordination with state and local entities to accelerate investment and construction of energy, utilities and related infrastructure.
- Sustained levels of research and development funding for energy-related programs through Ames National Laboratory and the greater Department of Energy national laboratory network.
- Protecting existing generation assets for the reliability of energy, benefiting customers in the region and promoting the investment of all-of-the-above energy in Iowa.

AGRICULTURE

A strong agriculture industry is essential for economic vitality in Iowa. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- U.S. trade negotiations and agreements that bolster market access and demand for Iowa's farm economy while protecting against market disruption and trade partner retaliation.
- Passage of a new Farm Bill.
- Programs and incentives to promote and assist in research, development and commercialization of biofuels, biotechnology and bio-based materials.
- A strong investment in capacity and competitive agricultural research funding for Iowa State University and the land-grant university system.
- Continuation and expansion of the Source Water Protection program.
- Funding for USDA Rural Development programs.

TRANSPORTATION

The Partnership supports investment in a complete, multimodal and accessible transportation system that efficiently moves goods and people, creates jobs, spurs economic growth and improves safety for all users. To that end, the Partnership supports:

- Designating Iowa 5 / U.S. 65 as an interstate while grandfathering in certain agricultural users through a federal weight exemption on the corridor.
- Increases federal formula funding for transportation in Iowa, including funding for multipurpose trails and recreational amenities.
- Fully funding DART's Bus and Bus Facilities Grant application to complete a new operations and maintenance facility, further opening Downtown economic development opportunities in a rapidly growing mixed-use neighborhood.
- Maintains existing federal infrastructure programs, especially those for improving safety.
- Closing the funding gap for the Des Moines International Airport's Terminal Project.
- Provides greater flexibility for local communities in utilizing the funds.
- Providing funding for the Ankeny Regional Airport runway expansion, south terminal project and maintenance building.
- Extending high-speed passenger service to cover Iowa and continuing enhanced federal investment in high-speed passenger rail funding.
- A stable funding process through the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and an increase in the Passenger Facility Charge.
- Enactment of an infrastructure investment tax credit for and opposing the re-regulation of the freight rail industry.
- A Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill that does the following:
 - Protects the Highway Trust Fund.
- Policies and programs that ease the introduction and widespread adoption of emerging transportation technologies and a national approach to automated transportation.
- Rural, suburban and urban regional priority transportation and trail projects, identified in collaboration with our regional transportation partners.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

The Partnership supports investments in the types of infrastructure which multiply the growth potential for businesses, people and communities. To that end, The Partnership supports:

- Policies that support broadband infrastructure and avoid over-regulation, and preserving the BEAD program, including retainment of “non-deployment funds” to support additional broadband state goals.
- Policies to address cybersecurity threats and attacks through a uniform minimum standard for the notification of consumers after a breach occurs, legislation to create a Systemically Important Critical Infrastructure and a process to facilitate better information flows between the federal government and the private sector.
- Policies that meet the dual goals of effectively narrowing the gap between supply and demand for housing.
- Funding for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields program.
- Expanding the flexibility of the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program to assist low-income families in emergency housing situations and policies that expedite HUD disaster resources following a natural or human-caused disaster.
- Increasing U.S. housing supply and affordability by modernizing regulations and programs, encouraging innovation, and providing local zoning flexibility.
- Continuing funding for CDBG and HOME programs to support infrastructure development for housing.
- Modernizing outdated federal programs, reducing regulatory barriers and boosting local flexibility for development.
- Enhancing opportunity zones to extend timelines and improve investment flexibility.
- Maintaining liquidity through Fannie Mae & Freddie Mac for multifamily and expanding SFH portfolios with adjusted underwriting criteria.
- Continuing to expand federal housing programs that preserve or create new affordable housing units across the U.S.
- Tax credits and other provisions that, when leveraged with additional resources, can be used to reduce the cost of construction and rehabilitation of housing.
- Increased funding for the programs administered by the local Public Housing Authority and simplification of federal regulations, creating more local policies to support the needs of the community.
- Tax incentives for commercial, industrial and residential green building and redevelopment programs that promote and encourage energy efficiency and other environmentally friendly practices.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Partnership believes that investment in soil and water infrastructure is crucial to a healthy community and the foundation for a strong economy. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- Flood mitigation policies and strategies through collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other partner organizations.
- Prioritizing the use of natural infrastructure techniques, such as restored wetlands or restored oxbows installed upstream to slow the flow in the upper reaches of the watershed.
- Policies and funding that further a regional approach with public-private and urban-rural partnerships to address water quality, soil health and water management strategies and goals.
- Financial incentives and continued education to support and expand the implementation of programs designed to minimize the quantity of nutrients and soil entering the Iowa's rivers and streams.
- Ongoing funding for research, prevention, reporting and mitigation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and harmful algal blooms (HABs), including the remediation of PFAS sites affecting water sources.
- Defending and sustaining FEMA's critical hazard mitigation programs, to support families and businesses both before and after natural disasters.

EDUCATION

The Partnership believes an effective educational system and proven workforce development programs are critical to the quality of life in the region and are leading factors in recruiting business to Iowa. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- Increased federal investment in early childhood education programs.
- Increased funding and support for work-based learning programs, including those offered by private businesses, municipalities and nonprofits.
- Adequate funding for programs to recruit, retain and train a high-caliber teaching force.
- College and career planning systems, programs and staffing, along with promotion of methods to encourage K-12 students and families to become informed consumers of all available postsecondary options.
- Policies and programs to make post-secondary education accessible and affordable for all qualified students through significant increases in need-based aid programs.
- Multi-state cooperatives for educational institutions, such as the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) initiative.

IMMIGRATION

The Partnership has consistently supported reforms to the federal immigration process, recognizing the importance and the profound need for talent to support job creation and opportunities for all residents of Iowa. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- A modernized immigration system and policies that support the workforce needs of Iowa.
- Expansion of the H-1B Visa Program for highly skilled workers, and the ability to hire H-1B workers directly from abroad for critical positions and to support our economy.
- Removing barriers to the travel visa process by fully funding visa services at U.S. consulates, allowing applications to be made in third county consulates and expanding the Visa Waiver program to facilitate business and global commerce.
- Increasing the number of available H-2B Visas and making both H-2A and H-2B programs non-seasonal to realistically account for the needs in agriculture, landscaping, hospitality, construction and other non-agricultural occupations.
- Expansion of the Employment-Based Immigrant Visa Program, including recapturing unused visas from past years and ceasing to count spouses against the total allocation.
- Creating a clear path for foreign-born entrepreneurs to open businesses in the U.S. and to hire U.S. workers.
- Dual intent for international students and codifying access to practical training benefits for F-Visa, M-Visa and J-Visa holders and specifically expanding the “Conrad 30” program.
- Passage of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act.
- Funding of the Office of Refugee Resettlement budget at a level that allows local service providers and communities to be prepared to receive new Iowans.

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HEALTH CARE

Iowa's hospitals, health care providers, and community health programs are the backbone of our health care system. Many provide essential care and services 24/7 and are key economic drivers in the community as the largest employers. Therefore, The Partnership supports:

- Strengthening the health care workforce in Iowa by:
 - Increasing the number of residency slots eligible and the expansion of visa waivers, including the recapture of unused employment visas for doctors and nurses.
 - Enacting important protections against violence in health care settings.
 - Increasing funding for clinical training programs.
- Improving community health by ensuring appropriate access to maternal, children's, dental and behavioral health care services for Iowa's most vulnerable residents in both rural and urban communities through adequate Medicaid and Medicare payments to sustain vital services, including through support of the current FMAP rates and extending the Directed Payment program for Iowa hospitals.
- Ensuring vital patient services are maintained and access to care is expanded by curbing cuts to site-neutral policies and maintaining the 340B drug pricing program.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Partnership supports investment in arts, culture, heritage and placemaking, recognizing their importance in attracting and retaining a strong workforce, promoting health and wellness and benefiting the local economy. Specifically, this includes:

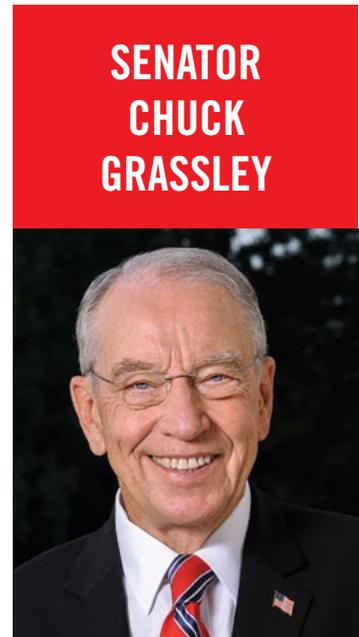
- Additional federal funding for the Iowa Confluence (ICON) Water Trails.
- Increasing investment in the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS).
- Grant funding for regional quality of life placemaking projects.
- Protecting nonprofit health and strength through the support of policies, such as the Johnson Amendment, that protect charitable giving and charitable purposes.

IOWA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

COMMITTEES:

- Senate Judiciary Committee (Chair)
- Joint Committee on Taxation
- Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee
 - Food and Nutrition, Specialty Crops, Organics and Research Subcommittee
 - Commodities, Risk Management and Trade Subcommittee
 - Rural Development and Energy Subcommittee
- Senate Budget Committee
- Senate Finance Committee
 - International Trade, Customs and Global Competitiveness Subcommittee
 - Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy Subcommittee (Chair)
 - Taxation and IRS Oversight Subcommittee

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Main	135 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510	(202) 224-3744
Des Moines	721 Federal Building 210 Walnut St. Des Moines, IA 50309	(515) 288-1145
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Sioux City	120 Federal Building 320 6th St. Sioux City, IA 51101	(712) 233-1860
Waterloo	210 Waterloo Building 531 Commercial St. Waterloo, IA 50701	(319) 232-6657



**SENATOR
CHUCK
GRASSLEY**

REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEES:

- Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee (Chair)
- Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee
 - Border Management, Federal Workforce and Regulatory Affairs Subcommittee
 - Conservation, Forestry, Natural Resources and Biotechnology Subcommittee
 - Disaster Management, District of Columbia and Census Subcommittee
 - Livestock, Dairy, Poultry and Food Safety Subcommittee
- Rural Development, Energy and Credit Subcommittee (Chair)
- Senate Armed Services Committee
 - Cybersecurity Subcommittee
 - Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee (Chair)
 - Personnel Subcommittee
- Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

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**SENATOR
JONI
ERNST**

REPUBLICAN



REPUBLICAN

REPRESENTATIVE MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS

Iowa's First Congressional District

COMMITTEES:

- House Energy and Commerce Committee
 - Health Subcommittee
 - Energy Subcommittee
 - Environment Subcommittee
- House Veterans Affairs Committee
 - Health Subcommittee (Chair)

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REPUBLICAN

REPRESENTATIVE ZACH NUNN

Iowa's Third Congressional District

COMMITTEES:

- House Agriculture Committee
 - Commodity Markets, Digital Assets and Rural Development Subcommittee
 - General Farm Commodities, Risk Management and Credit Subcommittee
- House Financial Services Committee
 - Capital markets Subcommittee
- National Security, Illicit Finance and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee (Vice Chair)
- Digital Assets, Financial Technology and Artificial Intelligence Subcommittee
- House Select Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party Committee

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REPRESENTATIVE ASHLEY HINSON

Iowa's Second Congressional District



REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEES:

- House Ethics Committee
- House Appropriations Committee
 - Homeland Security Subcommittee
 - Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee
 - Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Subcommittee
- House Select Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party Committee

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REPRESENTATIVE RANDY FEENSTRA

Iowa's Fourth Congressional District



REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEES:

- House Agriculture Committee
 - Conservation, Research and Biotechnology Subcommittee
 - Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee
- House Ways and Means Committee
 - Work and Welfare Subcommittee
 - Social Security Subcommittee
 - Tax Subcommittee

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Public Policy in DSM USA

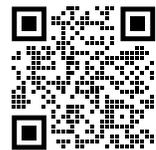
The Partnership's Public Policy team engages with local, state and federal officials to create public policy that generates economic growth, business prosperity and talent development in the Greater Des Moines (DSM) region. The Partnership provides opportunities for its Investors, Affiliates and Regional Chamber Members to connect, build relationships and continue dialogue with their elected officials, including during DMDC, the annual Washington, D.C. fly-in trip.

About the Federal Policy Agenda

The Partnership's federal policy agenda, along with its state policy agenda, are shaped by the Government Policy Council (GPC). The GPC is made up of Partnership Investors, Affiliates and Regional Chamber Members.

For more information about being involved with the GPC, contact:

Laura Book, Director of Government Relations, lbook@DSMpartnership.com.



Learn more:
DSMpartnership.com/publicpolicy

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